The Mennonites

A Brief History

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THE MENNONITES

A Brief History of Their Origin and Later Development in Both Europe and America.

C. HENRY SMITH, Ph. D.
Professor of History in Bluffton College.

15121
June 1932.

MENNONITE BOOK CONCERN,
Berne, Indiana.
1920

To My Wife
LAURA IODER SMITH
This Book
Is
Affectionately
Dedicated

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PREFACE

This brief sketch of the Mennonites has been written at the request of the Educational Committee of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America. Although the field of Mennonite History is already covered by a number of excellent treatises yet these are written for the most part in the German language, and such as appear in English cover only a special or limited field of the subject. The recent war also not only added a new chapter to Mennonitism, but aroused a greater interest than ever among the public at large in Mennonite principles and practices. Such is the excuse for this book. The aim of the writer has been to tell the entire story briefly and impartially, and in as readable a form as possible. It is hoped that the book may serve as a convenient text book in Mennonite Colleges and schools and that it may also be found useful as a brief compendium of Mennonite history for the general reader. The writer is indebted among others to the following men for various courtesies, such as the use of books, reading the manuscript, important information and helpful suggestions: H. H. Ewert, Gretna, Manitoba; H. D. Penner, Newton, Kansas; J. J. Balzer, Mountain Lake, Minnesota; H. P. Krehbiel, Newton, Kansas; C. H. A. van der Smissen, Berne, Indiana; John F. Funk, Elkhart, Indiana; J. G. Evert, Hillsboro, Kansas; S. F. Coffman, Vineland, Ontario, D. E. Harder, Hillsboro, Kansas; J. S. Hartzler, Goshen, Indiana; John Horsch, Scottdale, Pennsylvania; Peter Jansen, Beatrice, Nebraska; D. H. Richert, Newton, Kansas; Silas M. Grubb, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; S. K. Mosiman, Bluffton, Ohio; J. H. Langenwalter, Bluffton, Ohio; J. K. Penner, Beatrice, Nebraska; J. A. Huffman, Bluffton, Ohio, and J. R. Thierstein, Bluffton, Ohio.

C. HENRY SMITH,
Bluffton, Ohio,
April 25, 1919.

EUROPE

CHAPTER I

THE ANABAPTISTS

From 1525 to 1535.

The Anabaptists were a religious sect which emerged in Middle Europe from the Zwinglian and Lutheran revolution in the early days of that movement. Both Zwingli and Luther at first seemed to favor a more radical departure from the fundamentals of the Catholic system and one more in accord with the literal teaching of the New Testament than that which they finally adopted. When it became evident during the course of the Reformation that both the great leaders favored the retention of certain of the essential principles of the old church, those who favored a more radical and thorough change began to withdraw from the new movement.

The chief demand of the radicals was that the new church should be an independent, voluntary organization composed of men and women who, constrained by the love of God within their hearts, of their own volition banded themselves together for religious worship. Force, neither political nor ecclesiastical, could be used to bring about conformity of religious belief and practise. In other words, they demanded separation of Church and State, and religious toleration—an ideal so far ahead of the times that it is small wonder that those in authority soon did all in their power to check its further development.

This opposition first developed as a radical tail of the Zwinglian movement in Zurich. As early as 1521 there was some dissatisfaction with the views of Zwingli among his followers. In the second disputation of 1523 between Zwingli and his Catholic opponents, Simon Stumpf, pastor of Hongg

and one of the radicals, insisted in a dispute between the Catholics and Zwinglians as to what authority should decide religious questions, that the spirit of God as revealed to the individual must decide, and that each one must interpret the Bible for himself. Here we have the central truth of later Anabaptist teaching, and the germ of religious toleration.

In the meantime, during the following year as Zwingli gave evidence of leaning more and more toward the ideal of a state church, several of the leaders of the radicals frequently engaged him in argument both privately and publicly in favor of an independent church and religious toleration. During the same time, too, it became increasingly clear to these leaders that infant baptism was the logical sign of initiation into the universal church, and that admission into the voluntary, independent church must be by baptism upon confession of faith only. Perhaps soon after 1523 a group of radicals, dissatisfied with the half-way measures of Zwingli, met regularly in private homes for worship and Bible study with a view to establishing an independent church according to New Testament principles. Among the leaders of the new movement were Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, William Reublin, and George Blaurock.

Conrad Grebel was the son of a patrician and member of the Zurich Council. Conrad was not a clergyman, but was well educated in the Universities of Vienna and Paris. Up to about 1523 he was a warm supporter and loyal friend of Zwingli's, and the latter spoke of him as a "candid and learned youth". But after that the two drifted apart in their views. Grebel objected to a state church, and denied the validity and necessity of infant baptism. The Bible, he said, must be the final authority on all questions of religion, while the church must be organized upon the basis of the early Apostolic model. Zwingli accused Grebel of leading the opposition for personal and selfish reasons, but the latter's unswerving loyalty to his convictions and the sacrifices he made for the new cause prove the charge to be false.

Felix Manz, native of Zurich, a thorough scholar, was also a staunch friend of Zwingli's at first, but with Grebel began to question the Scriptural grounds for infant baptism and a state church. He was associated with Grebel in nearly all the early events of the movement. Failing to agree with Zwingli after 1523, he preached in his mother's house and in the fields. He became one of the charter members of the new organization in 1525, and the first martyr of the new faith.

George Blaurock had been a monk at Chur, but before 1523 he had renounced the Roman church and had come to Zurich to seek light on the religious question from Zwingli. Failing to find a satisfactory answer to his religious doubts from this source, he cast his lot with the radical party, and was the first to be baptized into the new church which came into existence by virtue of that act in 1525.

William Reublin had been a priest at Basel, but a serious student of the Bible and preacher of evangelical truth. Because of advanced opinions he was later driven to Wyttekon, near Zurich where as pastor he publicly declared himself against the baptism of infants. As a result many of his parishioners withheld their children, and were fined and imprisoned with Reublin for the offence. Here he also came into contact with Grebel, Manz, and Blaurock, by whom he was greatly influenced. He was the first of the Zurich priests to marry after discarding the Roman traditions. He became one of the original members of the radical organization and for a long time one of its most zealous promoters.

These four men were the most conspicuous leaders in the formative events of the new movement. Among others who made valuable contributions to the cause were Hans Brödli, pastor at Zollikon, Simon Stumpf, pastor at Honng and one of the first in 1523 to insist on the rights of the individual conscience, Andreas Castelberg, sometimes called Andrew on Crutches, for he was a cripple, and Ludwig Hetzer.

As stated above, by 1525 the central subject of dispute between the Zwinglians and the radicals was infant baptism.

The Zurich Council in the interests of harmony ordered a final disputation on January 17, 1525, with the hope of settling the question. In behalf of the radicals appeared all the above mentioned leaders who maintained that baptism should not be administered to infants, but upon confession of faith only. Zwingli, having the support of the civil authorities, was declared victorious in the debate. Despairing, however, of convincing the radicals of the truth of his views by argument, he was determined finally to try force. He accordingly persuaded the Council to pass a decree on the following day ordering all the leaders to leave Zurich, and demanding that all children should be baptized within eight days. The latter demand not being observed, it was again decreed on February 1, that the disobedient be arrested and all infants be baptized as soon as born.

About this time, too, whether directly before or after the January disputation is not quite certain, occurred the final event which completely severed the new party from the Zwinglian movement and branded them with a name which for a long time remained odious to them. This event was the introduction of adult baptism upon confession of faith. At a private home at which were gathered Grebel, Blaurock, Brödli, Manz, Hottinger, Thoman and a number of others, Grebel taking the initiative first baptized Blaurock, who in turn baptized a number of others. This event is significant in that it formally launched the new independent church, admission into which was secured through adult baptism upon confession of faith. The Zwinglians soon spoke of the new party derisively as "Wiedertäufer". The latter resented the name, however, and spoke of themselves as "Brethren." Later on they were also sometimes called "Täufer" (Baptizers) or in Northern Germany "Taufgesinnte" (Baptist-minded). German writers used these terms wherever the Brethren appeared in Middle Europe. In the Netherlands the term "Doopsgezinde" became common. English writers spoke of them as "Anabaptists" and that is the name that shall be used in this treatise.

Rejection of infant baptism and the introduction of believers' baptism, however, was merely the outward distinguishing mark of Anabaptist doctrine. Baptism was a mere symbol of initiation into an organization. Back of this practise and beyond it lay a whole system of religious principles. The Zurich Brethren had met for sometime in private homes for Bible study and worship. To them the Bible, especially the New Testament, became the sole source of the faith and practise of the new organization. The Sermon on the Mount literally interpreted formed the basis of their system. Love was the ruling force in all their relations one to another. The church was to be a voluntary organization. Political force could not dictate in matters of religious faith. The church was to be kept pure by means of the Ban through which fellowship was denied to the unfaithful. Since under the state system the magistracy used force both to take life and to maintain the state church, no Christian could hold office. Tithes and church taxes were inconsistent with the voluntary church principle and could not be paid. The New Testament taught them to love even their enemies and so it was wrong to take life, not only as an individual but even by military force and judicial process. Jesus said, "Swear not at all", and so it is forbidden the Christian to take an oath. As in the days of the Apostles there was perhaps at first a tendency toward communism, and a rather general belief in the early return of the Lord.

At first these views may not have been clearly formulated, and slight differences may have existed among the various leaders, but by 1527 the Anabaptists of Northern Switzerland and Southern Germany met at Schleitheim, near Schaffhausen, and drew up the first fundamental doctrines of the new movement. In seven articles they declared that, — 1 Baptism must be administered to believers only; 2. the unfaithful shall be excluded from the fellowship of their brethren by means of the Ban; 3. the Lord's Supper is to be regarded merely as a token in remembrance of the suffering and death of Jesus; 4. the Christian must live a life separated

from the world; 5. ministers shall be of good report, shall teach, and help members in their spiritual life, and shall be aided by the congregation when in need; 6. the Christian cannot use the sword and shall have no part in civil government; 7. all swearing of oaths is forbidden the follower of Christ.

In the meantime a radical movement had also broken out in Saxony among the Germans. In some respects this movement was similar to the one in Switzerland just discussed, but in others radically different. The latter was purely religious while the former was largely political and social. The two were regarded as identical, however, by the state churches, and the participants of the episode in Saxony were also called Anabaptists, to the great harm of the reputation of the Swiss Brethren. The leaders of the German radicals were Thomas Münzer, Lutheran pastor at Zwickau, Saxony, and Nicholas Storch, a weaver of the same town. About 1522 these men with others led an opposition party to the Lutheran state church and demanded an independent organization. They attacked the corruption of both the Catholic and Lutheran churches. They also rejected infant baptism, but Münzer was never rebaptized, nor did he administer the rite to any of his followers. In his earlier years Storch rejected the oath, magistracy and warfare, but later evidently changed his views. Both laid great stress upon inner revelations and considered themselves prophets sent of God to right the times, for which reason they were called the "Zwickau Prophets".

Like many of the enthusiasts of that day they pretended to make the primitive church and especially certain portions of the Old Testament and Revelation the basis of their new system. Münzer attacked the foundations of the State as well as the Church and taught revolutionary doctrines dangerous to both. Because the princes stand against the "true faith and natural rights of man, they must be strangled as dogs" he said. He traveled extensively through South Germany and sympathized strongly with the peasants in their

struggle for greater social and economic freedom. When the Peasants' Revolt broke out he became one of the leaders of that movement. He was captured at the battle of Frankenhausen in 1525 and was shortly afterwards executed.

What was the relation of the Zwickau to the Zurich movement? Both were called Anabaptist, and the opponents of the Swiss Brethren took little trouble to differentiate between them. It is true that in the early stages of the Zwickau development before Münzer had entered upon his radical program of political reform, Grebel and other Swiss leaders had written him a sympathetic letter, hoping to find him a kindred spirit. But when Münzer attempted to secure reform by means of force, they repudiated all connection with him. The two movements were entirely different in spirit and method, and essential aims. They should not be confused.

But to return to Zurich. Zwingli, as we saw, determined to force all into his state system, and to this end he persuaded the Zurich Council to give the Anabaptists little quarter. "Devils in the guise of angels of light", he called them. The Council lent a willing ear to his mad tirades, and passed mandate after mandate each more severe than the preceding with the view of utterly crushing out the movement, which they considered dangerous to the permanency of the established institution. Citizens within the Canton of Zurich who were baptized were to be punished by a fine, while those from outside the Canton were to be ordered out. March 7, 1526, it was ordered that those who insisted on disobeying the mandates of the Council were to be imprisoned for life on a bread-and-water diet "until they rot". No one was to give shelter or food to the Anabaptists. Grebel and Manz declared that they would rather die than give up their faith, a declaration which they soon were able to put to the test. All over Zurich and in other Cantons as well as other countries to which the Anabaptist doctrine had been carried large numbers were imprisoned. Finally the death penalty was decreed in Zurich for those who would not give up their

faith. Felix Manz was the first martyr. After spending two years in various parts of Switzerland, preaching and establishing new congregations he was finally apprehended and at Zurich in January, 1527, was condemned to death by drowning. The decree was immediately executed. As Manz with his hands tied over his knees, a stick inserted in between, was rowed down the Limmat by his executioner, and accompanied by a Reformed clergyman who to the last attempted to secure his recantation, his mother and brother standing on the banks nearby shouted words of encouragement to him. Just where the Limmat broadens into beautiful Lake Zurich reflecting the deep blue sky above, and the green hills on the border, Manz uttering his last prayer "Father, into Thy hands I commit my soul" was thrown overboard and disappeared beneath the waves—the first of a long line of martyrs who would rather die than give up their faith. From now on for over a century Anabaptists wherever they were found were condemned to a martyr's grave by the hundreds.

As a result of the Zurich persecutions the movement spread very rapidly throughout Northern Switzerland and Southern Germany. The simple message of the Brethren appealed to the masses. The cause was also aided by the inefficiency and immorality of the state Church clergy. When driven out of Zurich Grebel went to Schaffhausen, Brödli to Hallau, and Reublin to Waldshut, where he baptized Hubmeir and his entire congregation. Soon churches were established also in Zollikon, Grüningen, Appenzell, St. Gall, Bern, Argau and other places. In St. Gall twelve hundred were baptized within a few weeks. Because of the presence of so many Anabaptists the little town was called the "Little Jerusalem". Three churches were established in Appenzell. By 1527 there were thirty-eight congregations in the Canton of Zurich alone and nearly as many more in Bern. So large had the movement grown that on August 13, of the same year, a confederated Council of Bern, Basel, Schaffhausen, Appenzell, St. Gall and Chur was called to discuss measures

for checking its further growth. By 1530 all Northern Switzerland was overrun by the new faith. But by this time, too, the movement had nearly run its course in Switzerland. Relentless persecution had killed off all the leaders and driven the weaker ones back into the Reformed church, and thousands into exile, while hundreds had died in prison. By 1535 the congregations were few.

Simultaneously with the growth in Switzerland new Anabaptist centers sprang up in South Germany. The most important of these was Augsburg, which for a few years offered an asylum to religious refugees. A church was established here as early as 1526 which in the course of a year grew to a membership of eleven hundred. It was here that Hans Denck, one of the greatest leaders, was won to the faith, who in turn baptized Hans Hut, an influential though not particularly creditable addition to the cause. A number of the influential leaders of Anabaptism labored at sometime or other at this center. In addition to the two just mentioned may be added the names of Jacob Gross, Eitel Hans Langenmantel, Ludwig Hetzer, one of the founders of the church, and Balthasar Hubmeir. Here was held also August 20, 1527, a conference of all the Anabaptist leaders of South Germany, Moravia and Switzerland for the purpose of formulating and unifying all the various differentiating views that were appearing among the various leaders at this time. The meeting was presided over by Hans Denck and was called the Martyrs' Synod, because within a few years most of the attendants had been called to a martyr's death. From Augsburg churches were established at Munich, Regensburg, Passau and Salzburg. By 1530 the Augsburg congregation had reached its climax.

Another important center was Strasburg, a church being established here also in 1526. Among the leaders who worked out from here were Pilgrim Marbeck, Michael Sattler and Melchior Hoffman. For a time the city authorities were tolerant toward the Anabaptists, partly perhaps because it

was the home for a few years (1538—1541) of John Calvin whose wife had been the widow of an Anabaptist. It also became the scene of events connected with the work of Hoffman. At Worms Jacob Kautz, the Lutheran preacher, became the leader of an Anabaptist congregation. A number of cities south of Worms in the Palatinate and Baden also contained flourishing congregations.

From these and other centers congregations were established in many places in Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, Hesse, and the Palatinate during the few years immediately following the Zurich movement.

Sebastian Franck, an old chronicler of that day, but not an Anabaptist, speaks of the rapid spread of the Anabaptist cause throughout Germany as follows: "The Anabaptist movement developed so rapidly that their teaching was soon spread throughout the land, and they soon gained a large following and baptized thousands and drew to themselves many worthy souls. For they taught nothing but love, faith, and forbearance. They showed themselves patient under much suffering, humble and brake bread with one another as an evidence of unity and love. They helped one another in all their tribulations and taught to have all things in common and called one another brethren. They increased so rapidly that the world feared an uprising, which as I hear had no justification whatever. They were attacked in many places with great tyranny, being imprisoned, branded, tortured and executed with fire, water and the sword. In a few years large numbers were put to death. The names of over two thousand are posted at different places most of whom were killed. They died as martyrs, patiently and humbly, enduring all these persecutions."

During the first years so rapid was the spread of the movement that in many places it seemed in a fair way to dispute with other reform religions for the mastery. In Netherlands Anabaptists and Mennonites were the prevailing evangelical set for a brief period. The prevalence of Anabap-

tist doctrines and the fear that the state churches had of its spread is shown by the fact that almost every Confession of Faith drawn up in the sixteenth century in England and the Continent denounces them and their distinctive doctrines.

Anabaptist exiles from Switzerland soon found their way also to Catholic Austria. As early as 1525 a congregation was found in Steyer in Upper Austria. Churches were also soon established in Linz and Freistadt. In 1527 a number of Anabaptists were imprisoned in the castle of Passau where they composed a number of hymns later collected in the "Ausbund", the song book which became popular in South Germany and Switzerland for many years. In the same year Hans Hut made Upper Austria the scene of his activities for a while.

In Tyrol also churches were founded equally as early. In 1527 a number of Anabaptists were apprehended at Kitzbuhl, sixty-eight of whom were executed. In spite of persecution, however, the movement spread rapidly for a few years. Congregations sprang up at Brixon, Klausen and Bozen along the Adige, and in a number of places in the Inn valley. In 1529 Blaurock came from Switzerland. Relentless persecution on the part of the Catholic authorities, however, succeeded in completely rooting out the faith in Tyrol. Most of those who escaped the death sentence found their way to Moravia.

Moravia for a number of years served as an asylum for the persecuted of other lands, and refugees from Switzerland, Tyrol, South Germany, and Upper Austria came here in large numbers during the first years of Anabaptist development. It had been the scene of early evangelical movements, and many of the nobility were tolerant toward well-behaved, industrious immigrants. Moravia had just come under the Hapsburg rule, and the emperor did not dare to interfere too early with the rights of his newly acquired subjects. John and Leonhard Liechtenstein were among the most influential and tolerant of these nobles. These gladly received Hub-

meir, the first of the Anabaptist apostles, in 1526, when a large church was established at Nicholsburg. Under the influence of Hubmeir's zeal from six to twelve thousand, it is said, submitted to believers' baptism within the first year, including the two noblemen themselves. Congregations were established at Brunn, Znaim, Auspitz Austerlitz and other centers. Unfortunately while the Moravian Anabaptists enjoyed toleration from the outside they fell to quarreling among themselves. Under the leadership of strong-minded men who had held marked views of their own on many questions, such men as Hubmeir, Hut, Weideman, Spittlemeir, Reublin and Huter, a number of divisions occurred. By about 1533, however, Jacob Huter attained the leadership of the largest element, whom he organized into a communistic body later called after him Huterites. It is said by some authorities that during the period of their greatest prosperity near the close of the sixteenth century, they numbered some seventy thousand, a number undoubtedly greatly exaggerated. Another estimate of twenty thousand is undoubtedly much nearer the truth. Of the history of the Huterites after 1535 more is told elsewhere.

In Northwestern Germany, Julich-Cleve and Westphalia became the centers of Anabaptist activity. A congregation of seven hundred was soon established at Cologne, and soon almost every city along the Lower Rhine had an Anabaptist congregation. Who the first members of the faith were in this region it is not possible to tell, but from 1530 to 1533 Melchior Hoffman became the leading spirit throughout Northwestern Germany and the Netherlands. Among those whom he ordained to help him was Jan Matthys who with John of Leyden became responsible for the Münster affair. Dirck and Obbe Philip, and David Joris also became leaders of a healthier type of Anabaptism than that preached by Hoffman and his immediate followers.

Meanwhile persecutions continued apace. State governments and established churches–Zwinglian, Lutheran and Roman Catholic put forth their best efforts to completely de-

stroy the new doctrine. The Peasant's Revolt made the state Governments suspicious of any people's movement, and the refusal of the Anabaptists to take an oath and enter military service was interpreted as an act hostile to the Government. An independent church on the other hand did not promise any fat jobs to a ruling ecclesiastical hierarchy. During the first ten years of the history of Anabaptism thousands of men, women and children were drowned, burned or put to the sword. Sebastian Franck estimates that six hundred perished at Ensisheim, the seat of government of Southwestern Austria. Another authority declares that from 1525 to 1530 over one thousand were slain in Tyrol alone. In Linz seventy-three were executed within six weeks. In the Palatinate at least three hundred and fifty were accounted for. During the first five years it is estimated that in all at least two thousand went to a martyr's death.

Germany consisted at this time of over three hundred independent, self-governing political units held together by a weak imperial government which could advise but not command. Consequently it frequently happened that while Anabaptists were being driven out of one country they were tolerated in another. This accounts for much of their wandering during the early years. Hesse, Moravia and Strasburg were especially tolerant during the early years of these persecutions. By 1531 after thousands had been executed in almost every land where Anabaptists were found, the Duke of Hesse could boast that not a single person had as yet lost his life in his dominion, although all the princes of the Empire had been ordered by the Imperial Diet of Speyer in 1529 to kill with fire, water and sword all Anabaptists—men, women and children.

The common people often sympathized with the persecuted so that the authorities were forced to penalize the feeding and sheltering of Anabaptists and to offer rewards for their betrayal, high rewards being promised especially for the leaders. The passions of the people were appealed to

by false accusations. At Salzburg it was said that they had plotted the assassination of all the clergy. The defence of non-resistance made by one of the Anabaptist leaders even in the case of the expected Turkish invasion was twisted into a threat that the Anabaptists would join the Turks against their own countrymen.

The usual method of execution was burning at the stake, though drowning was also common, especially in the case of women, and many were also executed by the sword. One chronicler tells of the case of a beautiful young girl of sixteen whose youth and innocence had excited the compassion of those who witnessed her trial. She refused to recant whereupon the executioner fastened her hands to her side and held her head under the water in a horse trough, keeping her in that position until she was suffocated. Her body was then taken away to be burned. In Swabia in 1528 four hundred horsemen scoured the country literally chasing the Anabaptists out of the land. The limit of cold-blooded cruelty was perhaps reached in the order of Duke William of Bavaria to behead those who recanted, and to burn those who remained steadfast.

This relentless persecution resulted in rooting out the movement in many countries within a few years. Cornelius, a reliable Catholic historian, pays these martyrs this tribute:

"The blood of these poor people flowed like water. But hundreds of them of all ages and both sexes suffered the pangs of torture without a murmur, refusing to redeem their lives by recanting, and went to the place of execution with joy and singing psalms."

Of course it is not to be expected that a movement which spread so rapidly and which was subject to so many local modifying influences would always be able to keep itself pure from objectionable doctrines and practises. Anabaptism was above all extremely individualistic, and in the course of its brief period of rapid expansion it manifested a variety of tendencies in keeping with the spirit and opinions of its

Thielman van Bracht, Compiler of Martyrs' Mirror.

chief leaders. It is impossible to name all these leaders here, but in addition to the Swiss pioneers already mentioned the following were most responsible for the various tendencies of the movement outside of Switzerland: Michael Sattler, Ludwig Hetzer, William Reublin, Balthasar Hubmeir, Hans Denck, Hans Hut, and Melchior Hoffman. Each of these stamped his own personality upon that part of the movement which came under his special influence, and each modified the interpretations of its chief doctrines to suit his own particular point of view. Upon fundamentals, however, most of them agreed.

Michael Sattler, an ex-monk, was one of the original Zurich Anabaptists. Driven from that city in 1525 he became one of the leaders of a church at Strasburg, where he soon became an associate of Hetzer and Denck. The next year also he labored with Reublin in Moravia. While engaged in missionary activity he was apprehended at Horb, and tried at Rotenburg where he was ordered to be executed. The court decreed that "he shall be delivered to the executioner who shall lead him to the place of execution and cut out his tongue, and then throw him upon a wagon and then tear his body twice with red-hot tongs, and after he has been brought within the gate, he shall be pinched five times in the same manner". This order was literally carried out May 21, 1527, after which he was burned at the stake as a heretic. The charges made against Sattler were that he opposed belief in the real presence, infant baptism, worship of Mary and the saints, oath, warfare, extreme unction, communion of one kind, and finally that he "had left the order and married a wife". As the chief author of the Schleitheim Confession his views on fundamental doctrines can be learned from that document. The Martyrs' Mirror gives a vivid account of his trial and execution, while the Ausbund contains a hymn describing the same event. He was one of the most amiable and pious of the early leaders. Even his chief opponent spoke of him as "a dear friend of God, though an Anabaptist".

Ludwig Hetzer was also banished in 1525 as one of the original Zurich Brethren. In Worms, Strasburg and Augsburg he labored for the cause with Sattler and Denck. He was a good Hebrew scholar and aided Denck in a translation of the Prophetic books of the Bible. In 1525 he wrote "Evangelical Cups", one of the first pleas for prohibition on record. After several years spent in the interest of the Anabaptist cause, he was beheaded at Constance in 1529 on the charge of immorality, which, however, was undoubtedly merely a cloak to cover the real charge, that of Anabaptism.

William Reublin, as we saw, was also one of the charter members at Zurich. In 1525 we find him at Waldshut, just across the Swiss border, where he won Hubmeir to the faith. For the next few years he traveled throughout South Germany and Switzerland where he met most of the other influential leaders. At Strasburg he was imprisoned but again released. In 1529 he found his way to Moravia where he soon began the unhappy end of what had promised earlier a very useful career. Arriving at Austerlitz he opposed the communistic ideas of Jacob Huter, and soon led one hundred and fifty of the latter's followers to Auspitz to found a new congregation, which endured many hardships for a time. Huter, however, gave Reublin little rest in his new home. He trumped up the charge that Reublin, in a time of illness, Ananias like, had secreted forty florins of his own money from the common fund. He suceeded in deposing him and installing another leader of the Auspitz group. Reublin now completely drops out of Anabaptist history so far as the records go. He was one of the very few of the early influential Anabaptists to escape a martyr's death. Some say that late in life, in 1560, he re-entered the Catholic church.

Balthasar Hubmeir, born 1480, near Augsburg, was one of the most learned and influential of the early Anabaptists. A University graduate, he at one time served as a professor in the University of Ingoldstadt. He later entered the priesthood and at the time of the first break with the Catholic

church became one of Zwingli's earliest supporters, being present at the 1523 disputation to take part in the debate against the Catholic clergy. But coming into contact with the Swiss Brethren soon after, he cast his lot with that movement, being baptized by Reublin on Easter day, 1525, at Waldshut, the town where he had held his pastorate. He immediately baptized sixty of his parishioners out of a milk pail, brought in by one of the peasants. Soon driven from Waldshut he visited most of the South German Anabaptist centers, especially Augsburg where, in 1526, he baptized Hans Denck, and Moravia where in Nicholsburg he baptized the noblemen Hans and Leonhard Liechtenstein. He was a voluminous writer, and while at Nicholsburg had many of his pamphlets published upon the press of Froschauer, a Zurich refugee. In July, 1527, Hubmeir was captured by the Austrian officials and sent to Vienna where eight months later he suffered martyrdom at the stake March 10, 1528. Three days later his devoted wife was cast into the Danube. Hubmeir was one of the most moderate of the Anabaptists. Unlike some of the radicals he opposed communism. He differed from the majority of Anabaptists in his views regarding the magistracy and the use of force. A Christian could hold office he maintained and might even use force though not for the purpose of enforcing religious beliefs. Although he was not an immersionist, the modern Baptists regard him as the only early leader who represents most nearly the system of doctrines and practises of the Baptists of today.

Hans Denck who was next to Hubmeir perhaps the leading Anabaptist of his time, was born in Bavaria in 1495. By one Lutheran theologian he was called "The Anabaptist Pope", by another "The Anabaptist Apollo". A fine classical scholar, he served for a time as rector of a school at Nuremberg. Banished because of radical thinking, he found his way to St. Gall, where he was greatly influenced by the Swiss Brethren, although he did not formally cast his lot with them until 1526, when he was baptized at Augsburg. Here he be-

came one of the organizers of the movement, and attracted many influential citizens to the church. Banished from here he went to Strasburg and later to Worms, where with Hetzer, he devoted some time to the translation from the Hebrew of the Prophetic books of the Bible. He was forced to leave here also. After presiding at the Martyr's Synod in 1527 at Augsburg he became ill and being discouraged he begged permission from his old friend and teacher, Oecolampadius, to come to Basel. Seeing that his days were numbered, the latter granted his request. Denck died before the end of the year, at the age of 32.

Denck was an extensive writer and exerted wide influence through his literary work. Early in life he had come under the influence of Tauler, the mystic, whose spirit exercised a dominating control over his thinking. He did not always agree with his fellow Anabaptists in fundamental views. Being a mystic he was not a strict ceremonialist, even doubting at times the necessity of re-baptism. It is said that in his latter days he regretted having baptized anyone. His enemies later made much of the report and called it a recantation. So completely was he dominated by the idea of the love and mercy of God that he at one time doubted whether God would doom anyone to eternal punishment. He was also sometimes accused of anti-trinitarianism, but there is little in his writings that could be interpreted so as to substantiate the claim.

Partly as a result of the severe persecutions through which the Anabaptists were passing, but more because of the teaching of certain fanatics there appeared by 1527, in Southern Germany, the first signs of those chiliastic and apocalyptic tendencies which within a few years spread throughout Northwest Germany, resulting in the disgraceful affair at Münster. This chiliastic spirit first manifested itself in the preaching of Hans Hut.

Hut was a book-binder by trade and a native of Franconia. He was an early admirer of Münzer's and was one of the

captives at the battle of Frankenhausen, but was released on the plea that he accompanied the army merely as a bookseller and not as a fighter. He early manifested radical tendencies, being driven from his home community in 1524 for refusing to have his child baptized. He did not join the Anabaptists, however, until 1526, when he was baptized by Hans Denck at Augsburg. Possessing a strong personality and being an enthusiastic worker he gained many converts on his preaching tours through South Germany and Moravia. At this time, 1527, the Council of Nuremberg describes him interestingly as follows: "The highest and most eminent person of the Baptists is Johannes Hut, a well-informed and clever fellow of tolerably good physical proportions and a boorish person with light brown cropped hair and with a pale yellow little beard. His dress is gray and sometimes a black riding coat, a broad-brimmed hat and gray stockings."

Hut, undoubtedly greatly influenced by the radical ideas of Münzer, was the first of the Anabaptists to avowedly preach an aggressive millenarianism. Christ would soon come, he said, and turn His kingdom over to the elect. Hut was to be His special prophet. When that time came temporal rulers and priests would all be put to the sword by the invading Turks to whom the work of vengeance was committed. The Christian himself might use the sword to help usher in the new kingdom when the time came, but he must bide his time. In 1527 Hut actually gathered together a number of followers for the purpose of leading them to Switzerland or Mühlhausen to await the Turks. Whitsuntide, 1528, was the date set for the advent of Christ. But before that time arrived, he had been imprisoned at Augsburg and perished in an attempt to escape. In most points of belief Hut agreed with the large body of Anabaptists but his chiliastic doctrines and his near justification of the use of force to establish the Millennium were doctrines full of dangerous possibilities in those trying times.

In the teaching of Melchior Hoffman we have the doc-

trines of Hut pushed one step farther toward the ushering in of the Millennium. Hoffman was a Swabian leather-dresser, uneducated but well-versed in the contents of the Bible, especially the Prophetic books. As early as 1523 we find him travelling as an agitator of advanced Lutheran views throughout North Germany and later in Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden, touring the latter country in 1524 with Melchior Rinck, a disciple of Thomas Münzer. Being an adept at an allegorical interpretation of the Bible, he succeeded in astonishing the unlearned masses with his supposed insight into divine mysteries. He is thought to have embraced Anabaptism about 1530, either at Strasburg or Emden, which latter place became the headquarters for much of his later effort. For the three years following he became an enthusiastic preacher of Anabaptist doctrines as he understood them, together with a number of personal views, foreign to the large body of these people. His principal field of effort was in North Germany and Netherlands, where he wielded large influence among the masses. He was imprisoned in 1533 in Strasburg as a preacher of dangerous doctrines, where he died ten years later.

In doctrine Hoffman agreed in the main with the large body of peaceful Anabaptists, but like Hut differed radically from them on several fundamental points. His views on the incarnation were all his own, but similar to Menno Simon's later. His attitude toward civil government and his doctrines regarding the Millennium differed widely from those held by the soundly Biblical Swiss and South German Brethren. By a process of computation all his own, Hoffman had calculated that the end would come in 1533, and that Strasburg would be the New Jerusalem. He himself was to be the Elijah, who at the proper time was to crown the new king. Upon the arrival and passing of the day when the prophecies were to be fulfilled he patiently postponed the time of fulfillment to successive dates as occasion demanded. In the meantime he had been cast into prison, an event which he had prophesied, and which for that reason greatly enhanced his

reputation as a prophet among the masses. With the failure of Strasburg to materialize as the home of the elect, the belief began to take root among his followers that Münster in Westphalia was to be the New Jerusalem. Just what part the elect were to play in bringing about the new kingdom, Hoffman did not explain. He did not make an appeal for an armed uprising as did his successors. Yet, he taught that all non-believers must necessarily be destroyed by the sword. This was dangerous teaching and undoubtedly helped to pave the way for the disaster which followed at Münster a few years later.

Before his imprisonment, Hoffman had appointed Jan Matthys, a Harlem baker, as leader of his people in East Friesland. Matthys soon displayed a spirit of fanaticism and vindictiveness against the upper classes, altogether absent in the teaching of Hoffman. Whereas the latter had merely taught a passive interest in the actual erection of the kingdom of the elect which according to Hut would be accomplished by an invasion of the Turks, the former on the other hand preached that his followers must themselves take up the sword and put the godless to death. Matthys was the Enoch foretold by Hoffman. He now sent out emissaries throughout Westphalia and Netherlands scattering broadcast his views and inviting all to come to Münster where the kingdom of the elect was to be established, and where there would be a community of goods, brotherly love, no rents, and no magistracy. Due to the violent persecutions which the Anabaptists were undergoing everywhere the times were propitious for the acceptance of anything that promised a haven of rest. Numerous recruits were won also by the eloquence of these apostles. Among those who were baptized were Dirck and Obbe Philip at Leuwarden and David Joris of Delft, none of whom, however, took part in the orgies at Münster. On the contrary they strove hard both now and later to guard the original Anabaptists from these millenarian fanatics.

Among large numbers this new movement spread rapid-

ly. One error followed another in quick succession until Jan Matthys and his followers had nothing in common with the Anabaptists elsewhere, except the practise of rebaptism, which now meant nothing more to him than a separation and revolt from the established order. The movement became social and political, as well as religious. January 13, 1534, Matthys appointed John of Leyden to assist him in establishing the kingdom. Measures were now taken to make Münster the New Jerusalem in fact. A theocratical government was soon inaugurated, of which John of Leyden was set up as king. The Old Testament was taken as a model of the new social and religious order. Communism and polygamy were introduced. The original Anabaptists in the city were either converted to the new order or driven out. All others, too, had to consent to rebaptism or exile. In this way the whole city came under the sway of the new king.

In the meantime the Bishop of Münster had led an army against the city. Early in 1534 Matthys, in an attempt to raise the siege with a small army, was killed. For a whole year now John of Leyden and his subordinates maintained control of the city by a system of terrible cruelty and amid great suffering. All those who dared protest against the existing order were summarily cut down. Hundreds of men and women were slain in cold blood. Finally in 1535 the city fell, and many of those who survived the swords of their own bloody rulers were now massacred by the victorious besiegers. These massacres were extended throughout all the sections of the country affected by the late nightmare.

In this brief sketch of Anabaptism the term has been used in its widest application. Every tendency of the movement has been included. As has already been indicated, the peaceful Swiss Brethren, the Zwickau Prophets, and John of Leyden and his fanatical followers had little affinity for one another, and yet, in any discussion of Anabaptism, all must at least be given some consideration, if for no other reason than that they were hopelessly confused by the civil and ecclesias-

tical authorities of that day. They were all separatists and may have minimized the validity of infant baptism, but in the fundamental doctrines of a voluntary church membership made up of regenerated men and women admitted by believers' baptism, religious toleration, and non-resistance, — all fundamental doctrines of the Swiss Brethren and other Anabaptists who later became Mennonites, they were essentially different. The dispute as to whether all shall be called Anabaptists is merely a quarrel as to terminology after all.

Neither must it be supposed for a moment that the Münster teachings and extravagances were approved by all those who bore the name of Anabaptists. Those of Switzerland, South Germany and Moravia were unsparing in their condemnation of the Münsterites. Neither were all of the Netherlands and Northwest Germany swept into the recent maelstrom. Many retained their peaceful, non-resistant faith, and wherever possible bitterly denounced the fanaticism of the Münster leaders. Among the prominent leaders of the non-resistant Anabaptists in these regions were Obbe and Dirck Philip, brothers from Leuwarden, and later from Emden, who strove earnestly to stem the tide toward fanaticism. Menno Simons, also, who soon after this cast his lot with the Anabaptists and assumed the leadership of those who remained true to the principles of the faith as taught and practised by the Swiss Brethren, said some years later with reference to the Münsterites, "I can fearlessly challenge anybody, that under the broad canopy of Heaven can show and prove that I ever agreed with the Münsterites in regard to the aforementioned articles; for from the beginning to the present moment I have opposed them with diligence and earnestness both privately and publicly, verbally and in writing, for over seventeen years."

A small remnant of the fanatics survived the catastrophe, however. These were now led by John Batenburg, former Burgomaster of Steenwijk, and became known as Batenburgers. There were, also, at least, two other well-defined groups

of Anabaptists in these regions at this time, — the Obbenites, or peaceful Anabaptists, so-called after Obbe Philip, their most influential representative, and the Melchiorites, followers of Melchior Hoffman. It now occurred to one, David Joris, a wise plan to bring all these elements together. To this end a so-called synod was held at Bocholt, near Münster, in August, 1536, for the purpose of discussing means toward this end. Neither Batenburg nor Obbe were present, though it is likely that representatives of all the groups attended. The Batenburgers still advocated the use of the sword to bring about the immediate inauguration of the kingdom of the saints. These were opposed by the advocates of peaceful measures. Joris tried the role of a compromiser, and agreed with Batenburg that the sword should be legitimately used, but that the time was not yet at hand for the Millennium. He pleaded so eloquently for his views that many of the Batenburgers were won to his side. These formed a new group and were called "Joristen" also "Davidians". The synod had no other result.

The peaceful Anabaptists nearly all of whom later became known as Mennonites suffered great harm and injustice as a result of the Münster episode. Political and ecclesiastical authorities after this took little trouble to distinguish between the unobtrusive, industrious, law-abiding and sober followers of Grebel, Sattler, Hubmeir, Obbe Philip and Menno Simons, and the revolutionary, chiliastic and fanatical disciples of Matthys and John of Leyden. Because they agreed in rejecting the validity of infant baptism, and although on other fundamentals they differed as radically as the poles, they were usually classed together as Anabaptists and both equally denounced.

It will thus be observed that when speaking of Anabaptists one must keep in mind that there were a variety of sects and parties all lumped together under one name, which had some things in common, but also many differences. The peaceful group of evangelical Christians with whom we shall

be chiefly concerned must not be confused with the unsound and revolutionary elements of the movement known as Anabaptism.

Bullinger, a bitter antagonist of Anabaptists of all kinds, but perhaps a reliable witness, nevertheless, on this point names forty different sects in his day under the name of Anabaptists. Among these are: 1. The Apostolic, who read their Bibles literally, travel about without staff and shoes, and carry no money. Some preach from the housetops after the literal Scriptural injunction, and imitate children to enter the kingdom of Heaven. 2. Those excluded from the World. These have nothing in common with the world. They have hard and fast rules for eating, drinking and sleeping. They discard everything common to the rest of the world, for they must be a peculiar people. 3. The Holy, Sinless Baptists. These could commit no sin, and omitted "Forgive our sins" from the Lord's Prayer. 4. The Silent Brethren. According to this group, preaching is of no avail, and it is not necessary for the world to hear the Gospel. When asked respecting their faith, they remain silent, refusing to commit themselves. 5. The Enthusiasts are filled with the spirit of prophecy, see visions and dream dreams, and believe in an early return of the Lord. 6. The Free Brethren make the spiritual freedom a freedom of the flesh. They pay no taxes and are opposed to slavery. They indulge in all sorts of immorality and are shunned by all other groups. 7. Münsterites. All others despised everything high and exalted, but these aimed at power. And so on throughout a list of forty.

It is evident that this list includes practically all the sects of the time that opposed the state church system, and that all such were likely called Anabaptists. While it is true that these groups differed among themselves on many points, and perhaps very seldom claimed spiritual kinship among one another, yet they were similar, too, in certain characteristics, perhaps similar enough to justify treating them under one heading. They at least were all separatists and inde-

pendents. As separatists they agreed in such fundamental doctrines as adult baptism, separation of Church and State (not the Münsterites), a certain seclusion from the rest of the "world", use of the Ban, and other points. Even their differences resulted from the common attempt to follow closely the teaching of the Bible as each group understood it. These classes, too, may be regarded as the result of over-emphasis of certain points of view common more or less to all. Perhaps we might even say that in most cases they were not classes at all, but rather over-emphasis here and there of beliefs and practises potentially present in all.

It is difficult to say how many belonged to one group and how many to another, but it is fair to presume that the large body, as has already been suggested, were of the peaceable, non-resistant type. At any rate, soon after 1535 practically all these other groups and tendencies disappeared, and on the Continent only the non-resistants survived. These all became known later as Mennonites.

These differences were to be expected. The times were out of joint. The masses were adrift, awaiting leadership. No wonder that ambitious leaders were able to impress their own peculiar views upon the movement. We have already seen how such men as Denck, Hut, Hoffman and Hubmeir, to say nothing of John of Leyden, each had their own following. Persecution made secrecy necessary and a common organization dangerous. Each small group was thus left to follow the bent of its own Biblical interpretation or fanatical impulse. Neither was organization consistent with the movement. The people had just freed themselves from authority and tyranny, separating State and Church in their religious life. Individual freedom to choose their own religious faith was the very thing they were contending for.

Amid all this diversity of belief and practise, however, the movement known as Anabaptism, with the exception of the Münsterites, especially in their later stage, rests upon certain common fundamental propositions.

1. The Church is an independent, voluntary group of believers banded together for the purpose of worship. Separation of Church and State, and religious toleration are logical corollaries of the independent Church.

2. Infant baptism, the sign of initiation into the universal state church, has no place in the voluntary institution. Adult baptism administered to believers must be the initiatory symbol.

3. The Bible is the only guide of faith and practise. The majority of the Anabaptists preferred the New Testament to the Old as a source of authority. The primitive Church especially became the model for all the practises of the new Church; the Sermon on the Mount quite literally interpreted furnished the program. Among some with more fanatical tendencies the Old Testament, especially the Prophetic books, were prized above the New, and the inner light or direct revelation from God played a conspicious part as a source of religious faith and knowledge.

4. The office of magistrate cannot be filled by the Christian. Government is a divine institution ordained to protect the righteous and punish the wicked. It is made necessary because of the existence of the unrighteous and can be exercised only by them. In other words it is a sort of a necessary evil. The Christian must be obedient to his rulers, pray for them and pay taxes to support the Government. Not all held quite this theory, however. Hubmeir contended that a Christian might be a magistrate, but could not use his office in the interest of religious persecution.

5. The Christian cannot take up the sword. Love must be the ruling force in all social relations. It is wrong to kill as an individual, or by either judicial process or military force. Hubmeir, however; taught that it was permissible to use the sword though not to enforce religious belief. Hut came near teaching the necessity of force to inaugurate the kingdom of the elect.

6. Most of the Anabaptist groups regarded themselves

as rather a select people and were inclined to live a life secluded from the outside world.

7. Church discipline is to be secured through the Ban, used to exclude the disobedient from the rights and privileges of membership.

8. The Lord's Supper is to be regarded merely as a memorial of the death and suffering of Christ, and not as containing the Real Presence.

9. It is wrong to take an oath. Christ taught His disciples to say, "Yea, yea; nay, nay."

In addition to these principles which the large body of Anabaptists held more or less in common, there were other certain well-defined tendencies which in spirit at least were more or less potentially present in all, but upon which there was a greater divergence of opinion and practise than upon the articles above mentioned. On the question of community of goods there was much difference in teaching and practise. Traces of a communistic leaning were common. The example of the Apostolic church, together with the poverty of the poorer classes composing the Anabaptist body, and persecutions,–all these conditions naturally strengthened the tendency toward a sharing of each other's possessions. The Huterites were out and out communists; others, including Hubmeir and Grebel declared that communism was not essential, but that the brethren should be willing to help one another in case of need.

Among all there was more or less of a belief in the early return of Christ. Among the earlier Anabaptists the hope did not take definite form as to time and may have been little more than a pious opinion, but in the case of Hut and Hoffman the time was actually set, while John of Leyden declared that the time had arrived, and that he was to be the king of the new dispensation. The common objection to interest, tithes and sometimes war taxes, was occasionally extended on the part of the more radical to all taxes, both church and state.

As we have already seen, Anabaptist doctrines sprang up almost simultaneously and spontaneously in Switzerland, South Germany, Moravia and the Lower Rhine country, showing thereby that the times for such a movement were ripe. Among the causes for this rapid growth were:

1. A general interest among the common people in the reading of the Bible. For a long time the Bible had been the sole property of the priesthood and a sealed book to the laity, both because of its rarity and because of the unknown tongue in which it was written. The printing press, the most epoch-making discovery of all time, made the Bible accessible to the common man, who could find out now for himself what its contents were. Between 1456 and 1518 there were printed no less than fourteen editions of the complete Book in the German language and four in the Dutch, besides numerous editions of selected portions. Between 1523 and 1531 in Netherlands alone twenty-five editions of Luther's translation were rendered into the language of the people. Both leaders and laity among the Anabaptists were well-versed in the contents of the Bible as is shown in their disputations and in their public trials. They were usually more familiar with its contents than the Lutheran and Catholic clergymen, who persecuted them. It is not at all strange that these common people, unlettered as many of them were, coming upon this hitherto sealed Book, and finding that it gave no sanction for many of the practises of the state churches, should attempt to interpret it literally, and reconstruct their religious and social world upon the Apostolic church as a model. Under the impetus of the reform forces set free by Luther and Zwingli a people's evangelical movement made much more rapid progress than was possible in earlier similar movements before the sixteenth century.

2. The times were favorable for the movement. The masses were oppressed by landlords and church dignitaries. Taxes and tithes and Feudal dues were extremely burdensome, especially since they were exacted by the powerful to

maintain a political and ecclesiastical system, in which the common people had little faith. These were denied many rights and privileges to which nature entitled them. In the example of the early primitive church they saw a remedy for all their burdens, social and industrial as well as religious. It is not at all strange that the religious issue should become complicated with political and social questions. At any rate, the hard lot of the common man strengthened the appeal which the new faith made to him.

3. The soil was perhaps partly prepared by earlier evangelical movements. Waldenses and other sects more or less similar had existed in many of the centers where Anabaptism now flourished. These sects held many doctrines and practises in common with the later Anabaptists, and it is altogether likely that they made some contribution to the later movement.

Just what relation these earlier sects bore to the Anabaptists is a disputed question. There are some writers, who, permitting their pious wishes to get the better of their historical judgments, would trace the Mennonites back through Anabaptists, Waldenses and various Medieval and Ancient evangelical bodies to the Apostolic church itself. To the present writer it does not seem that even the Waldensian connection is as firmly established as the supporters of the theory maintain. While it is true that they had many things in common, they also differed in certain essentials. The fact that certain Anabaptist centers had also been Waldensian centers does not necessarily prove that the Anabaptists were merely made-over Waldensians. The strongest argument against the theory is the fact that nearly all the leaders of Anabaptism came out of the Catholic church directly or indirectly. Such Waldensian organizations as survived at the breaking out of the Reformation either maintained their identity or united with the new state Church. Few were fused with the Anabaptist organizations. The myth of Waldensian origin, although it was held by a number of contemporary

writers of the Reformation period, received its greatest impetus at the hands of later Anabaptists who hit upon it as the best reply to the state Church leaders who insisted that all Anabaptists were Münsterites.

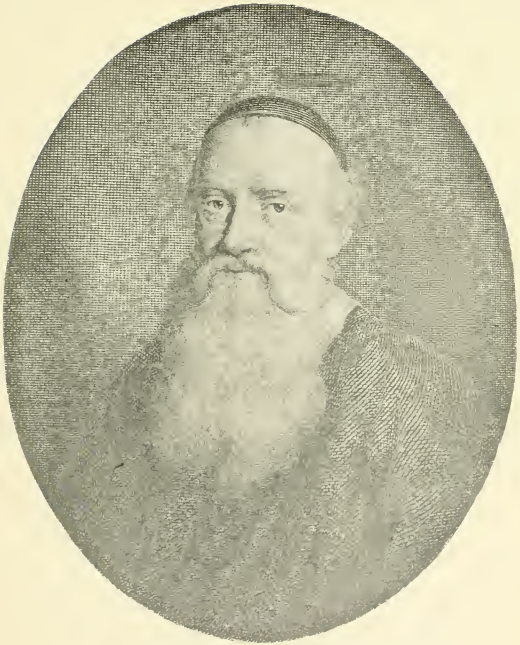
While it is altogether probable, of course, that the earlier movement had some influence upon the latter, just how much is uncertain, yet, it is equally certain that there would have been an Anabaptist faith, even though there never had been any Waldensians or other more or less evangelical sects. All these bodies sprang more or less independently from the same source, namely, an intensive study by the common man of an accessible Bible. To this common source one must look for an explanation of these often striking similarities in faith and practise, rather than to any supposed contributions that various bodies may have made to one another.

CHAPTER II

MENNO SIMONS

As we have just seen, Anabaptists of the peaceful type were not wanting throughout the Netherlands and Northwest Germany during the time mentioned in the preceding chapter. Being a quiet, unobtrusive people they did not attract much attention, however. Their leading men were Obbe and Dirck Philip, Leonhard Bouwens and Menno Simons.

The exact year of the birth of Menno Simons is still a matter of conjecture, but most recent authorities are inclined to accept the year of 1496. His birthplace was Witmarsum, a small village near the west coast of Friesland, one of the provinces of the Netherlands. Of his parentage and early life we know very little, except that he was educated for the priesthood, and assumed the duties of his office at the age of twenty-eight in the village of Pinjum, near his birthplace. Like many of the priests of his day he knew little of the Bible, and his religious duties sat rather lightly upon him. Being endowed with an open mind, however, and an earnest desire to know the truth he could not long remain entirely oblivious to the revolutionary religious doctrines that were shaking the countries of Middle Europe even to the remotest corners. We know that copies of Luther's writings had fallen into his hands at this time. His enlightenment began one day in the third year of his priesthood. While perfunctorily going through the ceremonies of the mass the thought suddenly struck him that the bread and wine he was handling could not be the real flesh and blood of Christ. Like Luther before him, he attributed this suggestion to the devil, and prayed and confessed, but the conviction would not leave him. He now turned



MENNO SIMONS, 1496-1561.

to the New Testament for light, and the more he read the more he realized that the suggestion did not come from the evil one.

Once led to doubt the truth of the prevailing system, his progress toward the light was rapid. He now began an earnest study of both the Bible and the writings of Luther and other reformers. In March, 1531, at Leuwarden, the capital city of Friesland, occurred an incident, too, that led to still further doubts and that turned his mind toward the Anabaptists. Sikke Frerichs, a tailor, was beheaded for having been rebaptized at Leuwarden. This incident led Menno to investigate the question of infant baptism. After comparing the views on this question of the Catholics and also of Luther, Zwingli, Bullinger and others with the New Testament teaching, he came to the conclusion that all were in error. Menno must have come in contact with the Anabaptists of this region soon after this, but he did not cast his lot with them for several years. Having been promoted in the meantime to a higher charge in his native village, he was unwilling as yet to break with the easy life that seemed to await him. His conscience evidently was accusing him, however, of playing the part of a hypocrite; for when in April, 1535, a group of several hundred Anabaptists, who had been tinged very largely with Münsterite ideas, and who had taken refuge in an old cloister near his home, were killed in a siege and the survivors executed, Menno was greatly disturbed by this event. He was greatly moved by the zeal and earnestness of these people, he said, as contrasted with his own selfish life, but on the other hand he was also concerned about the errors into which they had been led by false teachers. The fact that his own brother was among those that had fallen, undoubtedly strengthened the impression this event had made upon his mind. It was not until nearly a year had passed, however, that he had the courage to take the final step. In January, 1536, at the age of forty, he publicly renounced the Catholic Church.

To come to this decision required no small degree of physical and moral courage. Unlike Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, all of whom gained positions of great power, comfort and influence through their separation from Romanism, Menno by espousing the cause of the common people and religious freedom entered upon a career that promised nothing but humiliation, poverty and persecution.

Almost immediately Menno left his home town and crossed over to the neighboring province of Groningen, where late in 1536 or early in 1537, he formally cast his lot with the peaceful Anabaptists, being baptized by Obbe Philip, the leading man in that body in these regions at that time. Recognizing his ability as an organizer, and in view of his early training and also in view of the need for leadership, a group of Anabaptists soon came to Menno urging him to assume some responsibility in building up the Anabaptist cause in Northern Germany and the Netherlands. Again he hesitated knowing full well the dangers of the work, and because, as he says, "of my limited talents, great lack of knowledge, weakness of my nature, the timidity of my flesh, the very great wickedness, wantonness, perversity and tyranny of the world, the mighty sects, the subtlety of many men, and the indescribably heavy cross."

He was persuaded, however, and was ordained a minister by the same Obbe Philip. For twenty-five years now he worked amid many trials and with very little remuneration, preaching the Gospel, organizing new churches or reviving old ones and writing in defence of his faith.

For the first seven years Menno's chief field of labor was Groningen with occasional visits made under difficulties to other Dutch provinces where Anabaptist congregations were found, especially West Friesland and Holland. His most difficult work during these years was the fight against what he calls the "corrupt sects", by which he means undoubtedly the various groups of the more or less fanatical Anabaptists —Münsterites, Batenburgers, Melchiorites, and Davidians—

all of which still exerted some influence and especially endangered the purity of the peaceful group, at this time called Obbenites after Obbe Philip, their leader.

Immediately upon his renunciation of Rome, Menno became subject to the rigorous decrees then in force against the Anabaptists. But soon, also, he was marked for special attention. So important a leader had he become by 1542 that the Emperor Charles V. in December of that year issued an imperial decree effective in Friesland offering a reward of "one hundred golden Karolus gulden", and all expenses and full pardon in case the betrayer were an Anabaptist, for the arrest of "Minne Symons". Everyone also was cautioned on penalty of death not to give him shelter, food or drink, or have in their possession any of his books.

In most of the decrees against Anabaptists during these times rewards and pardons were offered to those who, because of intimate association with the intended victims, were in a position to deliver them to the authorities. These inducements occasionally uncovered a Judas. Somewhat later according to the story told by Menno's daughter, an attendant at one of Menno's meetings agreed with the authorities to betray him for a sum of money. Soon after, the betrayer with an officer unexpectedly met Menno passing by in a boat, but the would-be traitor remained silent until Menno had passed, and then exclaimed, "The bird has escaped." Upon being questioned by the officer why he had permitted the escape, he replied that his tongue was bound. According to the tradition the would-be betrayer was himself beheaded for this act.

Menno, who in the meantime had been married, was now forced to leave Friesland. He escaped across the border into East Friesland where under the tolerant Countess Anne a number of exiled sects had already found an asylum. Here while John a'Lasco, an earlier Polish reformer, was working out with the Countess the problem of an established church, the separatists were granted a spell of toleration. A thriving

community of Anabaptists under Obbe and Dirck Philip had been established at Emden, and soon other congregations were located at Leer, Norden and other places. Menno evidently soon played a leading role in the Emden church, for John a'Lasco engaged him in a public disputation within a short time. But the publicity caused by this debate made it necessary that an earlier imperial decree against the Anabaptists be now carried out. Both a'Lasco and the Countess, however, recognized a vital difference between the peaceful followers of Menno and his co-laborers and the fanatical Batenburgers, Davidians and other similar groups. In discriminating in favor of the former the Countess referred to them for the first time now in history, in 1544, as Menists, who were to be tolerated, while the fanatical sects were ordered to leave. Menno, however, also thought it advisable that he should leave.

Throughout his evangelistic career up to the last days of his life Menno was forced to carry on his work amid great difficulties and the constant dread of a martyr's stake; for by imperial decree a price was resting upon his head. He escaped only by seeking refuge among those princes and rulers of the three hundred or more independent governments into which the Empire was then divided, who had not yet decided upon the form of a state church for their lands, or, who were more tolerant than the spirit of their times. And so Menno now fled, in 1543, to a group of his co-believers in Cologne, where Elector Herman van Wied at the time was transforming the former Archbishopric into a Lutheran principality. But a few years later, in 1546, when the Catholics regained Cologne, Menno was again compelled to find a new refuge for his sick wife and children. He went to Holstein and we soon find him in Wismar in Mecklenburg, where he is secretly tolerated by the Lutheran magistrates of the city until 1555, when the Hanseatic league of which Wismar was a member, issued a stringent order against Anabaptists, and Menno was compelled to find another hiding place — his last.

There was a small church at Wismar made up principally of refugees, who were tolerated, but were obliged to carry on their worship very quietly. From here Menno travelled extensively along the East Sea region reaching Livonia and Gothland in his tours . He also had a printing press here, on which he printed a number of his controversial pamphlets. Although Menno and his followers were often tolerated by the municipal and state authorities, the theologians hated them heartily. At Wismar it is said one Lutheran preacher denounced Menno so vehemently one day in the pulpit that he dropped over from apoplexy. Another well-known theologian said he "would rather have a hat full of Menno's blood than a hat full of gold".

Menno Simons' last refuge was at Wuestenfelde in the county of Fresenburg between Lübeck and Hamburg, ruled by the nobleman Bartholomew von Ahlefeld, who protected Menno for the remaining six years of his life. Here he spent his declining years, writing and publishing his treatises on his own printing press, and travelling to the very end in the interests of the cause he loved so well.

Not only was a price fixed on his head by imperial decree, but it was ordered that no one under penalty of death was to give him aid in any form. During the first year of his ministry, in 1536, two men were arrested in Friesland for giving him shelter, but escaped the death penalty, which was the punishment for such an act of hospitality, perhaps because it turned out that Menno had not been baptized at the time. In 1539, however, a man was tortured and executed for a like offence.

In matters of doctrine Menno agreed in the main with the teachings of the Swiss Brethren and other peaceful Anabaptists. The true church, he insisted, must be composed of those of a regenerated heart. In his treatise, "The New Birth", he says:

"Behold, worthy reader, all those who are born of God with Christ who thus conform their weak life to the Gospel,

are thus converted, and follow the example of Christ, hear and believe His holy Word, follow His commands which He in plain words commanded us in the Holy Scriptures, for the Holy Christian Church which has the promise."

Infant baptism, he says, "is a self-begotten rite and human righteousness; for in all the New Testament there is not a word or command about baptizing infants, by Christ nor by the Apostles."

In speaking of the true Christians, "the regenerated who have a spiritual king over them", he continues,

"They are the children of peace, who have beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and know no war."

The Lord's Supper

"They celebrate in rememberance of the favors and death of their Lord, and in reminding one another of true and brotherly love."

The Ban

"extends to all the proud scorners great and small, rich and poor, without any respect to person, who heard and obeyed the Word for a season but have fallen off again, and in the house of the Lord teach or live offensively, till they again sincerely repent."

On civil government he writes,

"We now publicly confess that the office of the Magistrate is ordained of God as we have ever confessed, since we serve according to our small talent the Word of the Lord, and in the meantime we have ever obeyed them when not contrary to the Word of God and we intend to do so all our lives, for we are not so stupid as not to know what the Lord's Word commands in this respect. We 'render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' as Christ teaches (Matt. 22:21). We pray for the imperial majesty, kings, lords, princes and all in authority, honor and obey them."

Menno's views on such other fundamental Anabaptist

doctrines as rebaptism, non-resistance, religious toleration, separation of Church and State, opposition to capital punishment and war, objection to the holding of office and the oath, the Ban as a method of church discipline — in all of these he agreed with the large body of peaceful Anabaptists.

On two points, however, he held individual views which proved to be the cause of much debate and misunderstanding between himself and his brethren. One of these was his view of the use of the Ban which will be discussed in a later chapter; and the other was his doctrine of the incarnation which he perhaps inherited from Melchior Hoffman. With Hoffman he seemed to minimize the human properties which Christ received from Mary. The charge against him, however, of anti-trinitarianism is misleading. He denied neither the divinity nor the humanity of Christ, although his explanation as to how his humanity was begotten may have differed from that of other religious thinkers.

Like most Anabaptist leaders, Menno, when he was not being driven into hiding, was constantly being challenged to a defence of his views by his state Church enemies. A popular method among theologians and religious leaders of airing their differences was through open disputations. Two of these in which Menno engaged were of special importance. The first was a debate at Emden in January, 1544, with John a'Lasco, the Zwinglian reformer of East Friesland. This discussion which lasted for several days was held in the presence of a number of ministers. The questions involved were incarnation, baptism, original sin, sanctification, the two natures, and the calling of the minister. Of course, neither side was convinced by the arguments of the other. Menno's argument against infant baptism and his contention that the ministry should be self-supporting or be supported by voluntary contributions, involving as it did a rejection of the ecclesiastical tithes was especially objectionable to the state Church party. Although Menno was requested to put his arguments into printed form and was permitted to depart in

peace, within a few months he was compelled to leave East Friesland.

The other debate was held at Wismar in January and February, 1554, with Martin Micronius, a Reformed minister from Norden, in East Friesland. Much the same subject matter was discussed, — baptism, incarnation, oath, divorce, calling of ministers and civil authorities. The last session which was continued for eleven hours without intermission, ended with evident good-feeling and a common meal. This apparent toleration on the part of the state Church party was due to the fact that although the disputants were Anabaptists and Reformed respectively, the debate was held in a Lutheran town, where neither of the two parties were technically tolerated. For that reason there was not the usual publicity about this disputation.

The circumstances leading up to this Wismar meeting are not without interest. A party of fugitives, followers of John a'Lasco, formerly of East Friesland, who had just been driven out of England by Bloody Mary, had been shipwrecked in the ice near Wismar on their return to the continent. The Lutherans of Wismar offered no aid to the shipwrecked Zwinglians, but the Mennonites took food and drink to the ship and brought the fugitives to their own homes. Among the ice-bound passengers were the children of a'Lasco, under the care of a tutor. When one of the Mennonite brethren kindly offered to take the children to his home and care for them until they could be taken to their destination, the tutor protested on the ground that a'Lasco, who was accustomed to deal with people of high social standing, could not afford to have his children cared for by an ordinary peasant. Upon hearing of this incident, Menno exclaimed, "Very plainly we have not found in them the true humble followers of Christ."

Even in their distress the ardor of the Zwinglians for spreading their faith did not seem to abate. For they soon prevailed upon Menno to enter upon a debate with them.

Menno who was practically in hiding in Wismar, although he was known to the Wismar magistrates and was not molested, knew that he could be tolerated only as long as he avoided publicity. For that reason he made secrecy a condition of the disputation to which the Reformed party agreed. Micronius later, however, disregarded the agreement and published the proceedings. The Zwinglians who remained in Wismar only temporarily had little to lose by publicity, but Menno was again forced to seek a new asylum.

Menno Simons was also a voluminous writer in defence of his views. Most of his literary work consisted of fuller statements of arguments presented in such disputations as those spoken of above, in short treatises on various doctrines, and in replies to attacks made against him by the theologians of the day. He frequently found it difficult to get printers to publish his treatises, since in many places to print his books was made a criminal offence punishable by death. During his latter years at Wuestenfelde he owned his own press, from which were issued a number of his pamphlets. Among his most important writings are his "Renunciation of Rome", in which he gives his reasons for leaving the Catholic church; "Testimony Against Jan van Leyden", in which he clears himself of being a Münsterite; and the "Foundation Book", written in 1555, rather late in life, which gives the most complete and mature statements of his religious principles.

Menno Simons was not a great philosopher, but his arguments are soundly Biblical, and well buttressed with copious Scriptural references. He is more interested too in practical living than in doctrinal discussions. If his writings give evidence occasionally of a spirit of irritability it must be remembered that he was forced under trying circumstances to defend his faith against willful and malicious misrepresentations by his opponents. And compared with the language of the latter, Menno's speech is decidedly mild for that age of plain talk and forceful utterances.

Unfortunately Menno and his brethren not only were

forced to defend their views against enemies from without, but sometimes there was not complete harmony within. The two most troublesome questions on which they disagreed were the Incarnation and Ban, principally the latter. As early as 1547 Menno met Dirck Philip, Gillis of Aachen, Leonhard Bouwens and Henry Vremen, leading evangelists of the North Sea coast regions to discipline two brethren who had drifted from the fundamentals — Adam Pastor, accused of anti-trinitarianism; and Francis Cuyper, charged with pro-Catholic views. These two men were excommunicated and a general discussion ensued among the leaders on the place of the Ban in church discipline. It was agreed that rigid discipline was necessary to maintain the purity of the church, Menno especially contending that even the marital relations be suspended in case either husband or wife were excommunicated. These rigid views were distasteful to many of the churches, and later when attempts were made to put them into practise, no end of confusion followed.

In 1554 these same elders with several others from North Germany and Netherlands met again at Wismar, where they formulated nine rules of discipline to be followed by the churches. These forbade marriage outside of the church, and demanded that in case husband or wife lead an evil life, separation and remarriage be permitted under certain conditions. Marital avoidance was to be observed where the Ban was applied to the husband or wife. Business relations should be carried on with apostates only under extreme necessity. Children were advised not to marry without the consent of their parents. Just debts might be collected but no unjust measures were to be used in forcing payment. Bearing arms for military service was strictly prohibited. No one was to preach unless ordained by the church authorities.

The attempt to enforce some of these rules in the North met with vigorous opposition. Bouwens, who perhaps was a stricter disciplinarian than either Menno or Dirck Philip, insisted upon applying them to the letter in the territory

within his immediate jurisdiction, as did also Gillis of Aachen. The strict party carried the practise of marital avoidance to such lengths that many churches were thrown into great confusion. The Franeker congregation was rent in two by the controversy.

The South German and Swiss churches were pronounced in their opposition to the strict use of the Ban. Perhaps there was more need in the Northwest for its rigid application, for it was here that the "corrupt sects", — the Batenburgers, Münsterites and other survivors of the tragedy of 1535, were continually threatening the corruption of the church at large. Menno himself declared that without a strict application of the Ban he would have been unable to keep his own churches clear from the Münsterite errors. At any rate, the southern brethren were so strenuously opposed to the Wismar rules that they called several conferences to discuss this and other questions at Strasburg in 1555 and 1557. The doctrine of Incarnation on which there was difference of opinion was the chief issue in the 1555 conference, and after declaring that

"The confusion of tongues has come upon the brethren in this matter because they would know more than it was intended they should know," they urged that more attention be paid to keeping God's commands than prying into such mysteries. They should be satisfied with the statement, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us"—good advice which, if taken, would have profited many of the theologians of that day.

The conference of 1557 was attended by over fifty representatives of the churches of Suabia, Moravia, Switzerland, the Palatinate, Wurtemberg, and Alsace. The chief purpose was to discuss the Wismar rules. It was decided that the regulations laid down by the northern brethren, especially regarding the application of the Ban to domestic relations, were too strict. Extenuating circumstances should be considered, they declared. The conference appealed to Menno

at Wismar for milder measures. As a proof of their right to speak in behalf of the churches, the delegates who signed the appeal stated that many of them still bore on their persons the marks of persecution. One was present, who, thirty years before, had entertained Michael Sattler in his own home. A committee of three qualified men was appointed to carry to Menno the greetings of the conference and also the results of the Strasburg meeting. This committee was to come to an understanding with him on the disputed points and report back to the churches in Germany and the Netherlands. These men, however, failed so utterly both in their interview with the leader at Wismar and in the report they later gave of their visit that the situation became more confused than ever. An actual division resulted in some of the northern churches.

Menno was greatly disturbed by these events in his declining years, and travelled extensively for the purpose of healing the breach, but to little avail.

His latter days were spent at Wuestenfelde in rather straitened circumstances. He evidently received some sort of income from Friesland, for in a letter to his brother-in-law he asks for sixty gulden, which are due him "for", says he, "butchering time is here and I have nothing with which to buy." He died January 13, 1561, and was buried in his own garden. The exact place of his burial is unknown now, for during the Thirty Years' War Wuestenfelde was one of the villages that fell prey to the spirit of devastation which characterized that period.

Menno Simons deserves a higher rank among the great reformers than has thus far been accorded him by writers of church history. Although he did not play as conspicuous a role as did his contemporaries, — Luther, Zwingli and Calvin, his real greatness cannot be measured by the humble part he seemed to play upon the religious arena of his time. His task was in many respects a much more difficult one than that of the founders of the state churches. They relied upon

a union of State and Church and upon the support of the strong arm of the temporal powers to maintain their system. Menno on the other hand appealed to the force of love and the simple truth of the Gospel as vital enough to secure the permanency of the true church. Menno and his co-workers were centuries ahead of their day on many of the great fundamentals of religious and civil liberty which today in America and the more enlightened portions of Europe are taken for granted, such as religious toleration, separation of Church and State, and the desirability at least of universal peace. As the world grows into a realization of these great fundamental truths, Menno Simons' place as a pioneer will become more and more secure.

It is thus observed that Menno Simons was not the founder of a new church but merely one of the early leaders, perhaps the most influential among them in the early formative period. It was not uncommon for new movements to be named after conspicuous leaders. Thus the peaceful Anabaptists of Netherlands and East Friesland before Menno's time were called Obbenites after Obbe Philip. The followers of Melchior Hoffman were called the Melchiorites. In some sections of Germany where Dirck Philip's influence was strong they were locally termed Dirkites. The term Menist as we saw was first used in 1544, by Countess Anna of East Friesland, as a distinguishing title. Soon after this in both North and South Germany they were often glad to assume this name because under that name they were better able to escape the consequences of the decree against the Anabaptists. And so the name Menist was likely assumed by the followers of Menno themselves.

After the granting of religious toleration in the Netherlands by William, the name Menist might have fallen out of use in the Netherlands had it now not again been revived as a party name. During the controversy over the question of the Ban and Avoidance, the Flemish and the Frisians who accepted Menno's strict views in these matters again became

known as Menists, while the Waterlanders, High Germans and Young Frisians who accepted liberal views in these matters repudiated the name of the author of the strict views but preferred the older name of "Doopsgezinde". As party strife died out during the early nineteenth century, and as the Dutch churches all became more liberal, "Doopsgezinde" began to prevail over the other title and that is the official name of the church in Netherlands today.

In Switzerland during the periods of heavy persecution, the Swiss, while they were under heavy obligations to the Dutch, they were inclined to assume the name Menist also, but at other times "Alt-Evangelische Täufer" was more common. One recent writer calls attention to the fact that the name Mennonite was used especially in those countries in which the imperial decrees against Anabaptists were effective — in Germany and the Netherlands for a time, not in France and in Switzerland. Under whatever name these descendants of the peaceful Anabaptists went, however, they were all essentially Mennonite and in this treatise they shall all be called such.

Mention has already been made of Menno's faithful colaborers, who in some respects may have done equally as much in the extension of the non-resistant faith, but who did not leave their names as a heritage to the movement. These men should at least be given brief mention here.

Obbe Philip was the leading spirit among the peaceful Anabaptists of Netherlands and East Friesland during the troublesome times of the Münster affair, and did more than any other leader in keeping large numbers out of that movement. He baptized and ordained Menno Simons, and for a few years faithfully labored with him at Emden in the interests of the cause. In the early forties he withdrew from the brotherhood, for a cause not known. Tradition says he later re-entered the Catholic church, but how true the tradition is we do not know.

Dirck Philip, a native of Leuwarden, and brother of

DIRCK PHILIP

Obbe, was also baptized and ordained by his brother and closely associated with him during his period of service. Dirck later became the most intimate associate of Menno's, and after him the most influential exponent of Anabaptist doctrines. He made Danzig the center of his activities throughout Northeastern Germany during the last twenty years of his life. He wrote several books, the principal one being "Enchiridion", still read extensively by the Old Order Amish because Dirck is one of the few old authors who advocates a rigid observance of the practise of Avoidance, a practice still common to the Amish.

Leonhard Bouwens was perhaps the most eloquent and successful evangelist of the entire group of northern leaders. He was ordained as elder in 1551, and given Northeastern Netherlands as his special field of labor. His eloquence and zeal won many converts. In a few years he baptized over ten thousand people. His period of labor came at a time when persecution ran high, and he took many risks in his public ministry. He was a strict disciplinarian and was perhaps largely responsible for the division of 1557.

Another of Menno's co-laborers was Gillis of Aachen, born in 1500, in Holland, and ordained an elder by Menno in 1542. He travelled extensively in Holland and Northern Germany and baptized many converts. He baptized more martyrs than any other elder whose name appears in the Martyrs' Mirror. He evidently was of a somewhat vacillating character, however, for in 1552 he was placed under the Ban by Menno because of a moral lapse, but later again reinstated. He was captured in 1557 at Antwerp, and under torture recanted, for which reason van Bracht refused to include him in his list of martyrs, even though his recantation availed him nothing, for his right arm and head were cut off and his body thrown into the flames to be burned. His son of the same name later became a minister of Amsterdam, as did also his grandson, the well-known Dr. Galenus Abrahams deHaan.

As a result of the heroic efforts of these and other men

not named, the Anabaptist faith was greatly extended throughout the Netherlands and Northern Germany, kept free from the unsound doctrines of the "corrupt sects", and given a definite organization, which carried it safely through the trying times that were still to follow.

CHAPTER III

THE NETHERLANDS

Anabaptists appeared in Northwestern Germany and in the Netherlands early in the history of the movement. Who the first of the faith were in these regions it is not possible to tell, but as early as 1530, Jan Trypmaker, a follower of Melchior Hoffman, founded a group here, and Hoffman himself played an important role in the spread of the movement. Every variety of the Anabaptists seemed represented, but of the peaceful type, as we have already seen, Dirck Philip and his brother Obbe, Leonhard Bouwens, and Menno Simons became the chief leaders. In spite of persecutions the movement seems to have made more progress here than in any other region. Up to the middle of the sixteenth century, the Anabaptists were the predominant evangelical party in Netherlands and for a time seemed destined to win the entire land to their faith. At one time one-fourth of the population of Friesland was of the Anabaptist persuasion. Lutherans never gained much foothold and the Reformed faith did not develop much influence until the latter half of the century. The movement was confined largely to the northern provinces — Holland, Zealand, Overyssel, Friesland, and Groningen, with some settlements in Flanders and Brabant where it was stamped out quite early, however.

It was in the Netherlands, too, that persecutions raged fiercest. Those provinces at this time constituted a part of the Spanish dominion. Both Charles V. and his successor, Philip II., were devout Catholics, and did their utmost to root out every vestige of the anti-Catholic sentiment from their possessions. For three-quarters of a century, men, wo-

men and children were condemned to the most cruel forms of torture and death because they asked for the right to worship God in the way that seemed right to them. Just how many suffered a martyr's death is not possible to tell, but the number must have been large. In Amsterdam alone in one year, 1535, thirty were executed. During Duke Alva's rule of a few years one hundred and eleven were sent to their death in two provinces—Holland and Zealand. The Martyrs' Mirror contains hundreds of names of martyrs, most of whom were from the Netherlands. It is perhaps not too extravagant to say that from 1531 to 1594, the dates of the first and the last executions. between fifteen hundred and two thousand Anabaptists and Mennonites were sent to a martyr's grave.

An edict of 1569 issued by Philip II. to take an inventory of all Mennonite property with a view to confiscation lends plausibility to the charge that greed for the possessions of well-to-do tradesmen may have had a great deal to do with this wholesale slaughter of innocent men and women. No one on pain of a heavy fine and in some cases death was permitted to shelter a Mennonite refugee, while inducements to betray them were made by a promise of one-third of the property of the victim.

These persecutions continued until William of Orange became Stadtholder of the northern provinces, who in 1578 granted the Mennonites a limited toleration. There were a few isolated cases after this where men were killed for their faith, but the day when men were called upon to die for their religion practically passed in the Netherlands with the close of the century.

The methods of execution were as cruel as fanatical ingenuity could devise. Burning at the stake, sometimes with a slow fire, was a common method. Occasionally a bag of powder would be tied about the neck or placed in the hat of the victim, which would hasten his death when it caught fire and exploded. Women were frequently tied in a bag, and

thrown into rivers and lakes. Occasionally victims were buried alive. Men and women were stretched on the rack until their bones cracked and blood flowed; had their tongues and limbs pierced by screws, or pinched in vises for the purpose of forcing them to betray the whereabouts of their fellow-believers. But seldom even under the greatest pain could they be induced to implicate others.

In the cross-questioning process to which they were subjected for the purpose of getting information regarding others they were frequently compelled to give evasive answers. In 1556 Claes de Praet was apprehended at Ghent, and among other questions the following dialogue took place between the prisoner and his captor.

Bailiff: "Where was it that you received baptism?"

Claes: "At Antwerp."

Bailiff: "In what home?"

Claes: "In a small new home."

Bailiff: "What trade was carried on in it?"

Claes: "I saw no trade carried on in it."

Bailiff: "What kind of a man was he who baptized you?"

Claes: "He appeared to be a blameless man."

Continuing his own story, Claes says further on in the record, "The clerk asked me what persons from Ghent I had left at Emden. I gave him no answer, for it was none of his business to ask."

The above incident is typical of hundreds found recorded in van Bracht's Martyrs' Mirror. From the study of these cases we observe that the doctrinal matters of chief concern to the inquisitors were baptism, the Roman church, the Lord's Supper, and the incarnation. Mennonites were identified by their views on these points. The question of the oath and the refusal to bear arms was of more concern to the temporal authorities. On the incarnation the theories of Melchior Hoffman and Menno Simons seemed to be quite prevalent. This view was especially objectionable to the Catholic theologians, for the reason that if Mary contributed no hu-

man properties to Christ, the proof that she was the mother of God would be considerably weakened. These examinations, also, disclose the fact that these quiet, inoffensive Mennonites were quite commonly confused with the Münsterites by the Catholic theologians, a charge which the accused vigorously denied, but of no avail. Either ignorantly or deliberately their persecutors insisted on maintaining the charge.

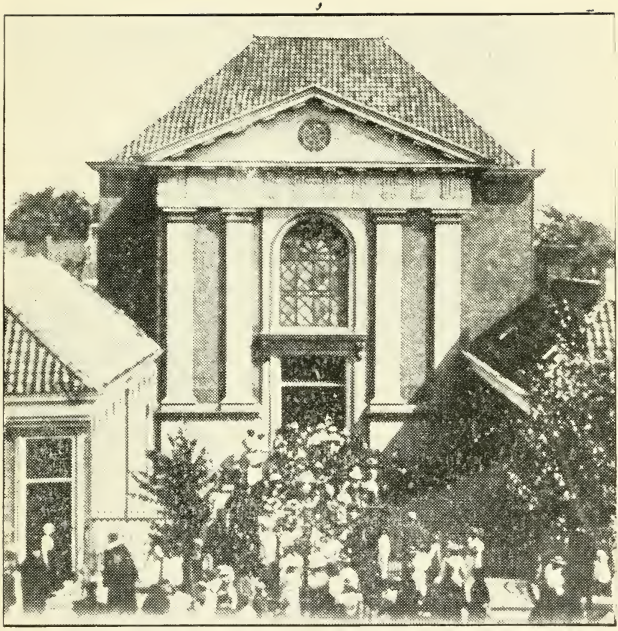
Priests were often sent into the cells of doomed men for the purpose of securing a recantation. Van Bracht records the discussion, in 1569, between a Mennonite prisoner, Jacob de Roore by name, and a Franciscan friar, Corneliz. After sounding his victim on many of the fundamental doctrines, the friar found him so well-versed in the Scriptures that he exclaimed, "You Anabaptists are certainly fine fellows to understand the Holy Scriptures; for before you are baptized you can't tell A from B, but as soon as you are baptized you can read and write. If the devil and his mother do not have a hand in this I do not understand anything about you people." Upon asking Jacob what he thought of the sacrament of the confession, and upon being referred to a quotation from James, "Confess your faults to one another," the exasperated friar broke forth, "You accursed Anabaptist that you are. You seek nothing but to tangle up everything that is advanced against you — the devil wags your tongue."

After suffering several hours of abuse, similar to the above, Jacob ventured to suggest:

"I am heartily sorry that you always get so incensed and excited about my answers, and that you do not consider that Paul says to Titus that a teacher must not be snappish, angry or contentious."

Finding this Mennonite weaver more than a match for him in the Scriptures, friar Corneliz concluded the interview:

"Well, I have no desire to dispute any longer with you. I shall go my way and let the executioner dispute with you, with a burning fagot and afterward the devil in hell with a burning pitch, brimstone and tar, see!"



Mennonite Church, Sneek, Holland.

Jacob: "No; for Paul writes, If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Corneliz: "Bah, in hell, in hell, expect nothing else than to go through this temporal fire into the eternal. Hell yawns and gasps for your soul, you accursed, damned Anabaptist that you are, see!"

As a result of these persecutions thousands of those who escaped death at the stake or in prison were forced back into the state Church, or escaping across the borders founded new communities in other lands. Many churches along the Lower Rhine in Germany, in East Friesland and West Prussia were founded by Dutch refugees. Some also found their way to England.

In return for William's edict of toleration, in 1578, the Waterlander Mennonites supplied the Stadtholder with large contributions of money and supplies gathered from the congregations; for the Mennonites here and in other lands took the rather inconsistent stand of refusing to bear arms but willing to furnish money with which to supply the means of war. In 1575, when there was a call for universal service in the northern provinces the Mennonites were requested to come with spades for non-combatant service instead of guns. Maurice, William's successor, followed his father's lenient policy toward the Mennonites, as did also later successors.

After Calvinism replaced Catholicism in the Netherlands, the Reformed state Church attempted the role of persecutor; for the Mennonite doctrine of the separation of State and Church and the voluntary congregational church organization was as distasteful to the Reformed as it had been to the Catholics, since these principles, if adopted, would put an end to all established churches. In most of the provinces the Church appealed to the temporal authorities to limit their privileges. In West Friesland where Calvinism was especially strong, a synod at Dordrecht, in 1574, requested the Provincial Estates to force all Mennonites to take the oath

on pain of exile, to have their children baptized, and to grant the Reformed permission to attend meetings of Mennonites for the purpose of converting them. This latter privilege was granted, but with what result is not known. A later synod demanded that Mennonite bishops be denied the right to baptize. In 1604, the ordaining of young ministers was to be forbidden. The next year a synod attempted to prevent the building of church houses. And so on for nearly the entire seventeenth century the Reformed Church tried to crush the Mennonite faith. Its failure to do so was due to the tolerant policy of the Stadtholders and of the States General.

It must not be supposed, however, that the toleration of 1578 and later included absolute religious freedom as we think of that term today. Toleration was limited to the right to worship without fear of suffering the death penalty. In some of the Dutch provinces the Established Church still succeeded through magistrates and provincial estates to greatly hamper the religious freedom of the Mennonites. Thus in 1602 the magistrate of Sneek forbade them to worship in public. In Leuwarden they were denied the right to carry on business, and three ministers were ordered to leave the city within three days. Everywhere Mennonites were still compelled to pay taxes for the support of the state Church, to have their marriages confirmed by them, and were denied the right of full-fledged citizenship. It was not until the close of the century that Mennonites were placed upon the same footing with the Reformed in religious matters and civil rights.

In spite of these oppressions from without the Dutch Mennonites found time to quarrel among themselves over questions of doctrine and practise. The tendency toward division has been characteristic of Mennonite history from its earliest beginnings. Among other reasons the following may be suggested: 1. Mennonitism is the essence of individualism. The individual is to interpret the Bible for himself; he is to worship as he pleases and to obey only his own

conscience in all matters of religious faith. Persecution in the early days made secrecy necessary, and common organization impossible. Each congregation was a self-governing unit. 2. A spirit of exclusiveness, as we have already seen, characterized the early Anabaptist movement as well as the later Mennonites. This feeling was engendered by the conception that the true Christian must live a life separated from the world, and was reenforced by the fierce persecutions through which they passed. 3. Coupled with this spirit of exclusiveness there was the provincialism or sectionalism which would lead each group to look with suspicion upon the opinions and practises of other groups, if they differed from their own.

The question which aroused most discussion and caused most of the divisions was that of church discipline, especially the use of the Ban and the practise of shunning those who were excommunicated. Attention has already been called to the divisions which arose in Menno's day as a result of the strict application of this practise to marital avoidance. Two other troublesome questions were the incarnation and mode of baptism.

Space does not permit here a detailed discussion of the various party divisions existing during the latter half of the sixteenth century. A brief enumeration, however, may not be out of place.

The Flemish were refugees who had come originally from Flanders into Friesland. Many of them were skilled weavers and had been well-to-do citizens in their homeland. They possessed more culture than did the Frisians and were inclined to be more liberal in their religious thinking and practise. There was an extremely conservative wing among them, however, known as the Old Flemish. These Old Flemings were exceedingly strict disciplinarians and were similar in many respects to the Old Order Amish in America today. They made free use of the Ban and shunned all those excommunicated, carrying marital avoidance to extreme

length. The practise of shunning, advocated by Dietrich Philip and also Menno Simons to a less extent, it will be remembered, demanded that all intercourse, social and business relations as well as religious fellowship, be severed with one who was excommunicated, and among the stricter sects this was extended to the marital relations as well. The Old Flemish practised feetwashing, but only among elders when visiting from a distance. They wore hooks and eyes on their clothes, and shoestrings instead of buckles. They wore long beards and insisted upon peculiar cuts of clothing. Some practised immersion and were called "dompelaars". Silent prayer was customary. They were quite literal in their interpretation of the Bible, some insisting on observing the Lord's Supper in the evening.

At the liberal end were the Waterlanders, so-called because originally they came from the southern end of Holland, a region called Waterland. These were exceedingly sparing in their use of the Ban, insisted on no set Confession of Faith, and had few set rules regulating their belief and practise. Leonhard Bouwens called them "dung wagons" perhaps because their liberal discipline permitted some to remain in the church who were not worthy.

Between these two extremes were the Frisians and Upper Germans. The former as the name implies were the churches of Friesland, who refused at first to fellowship with the Flemish immigrants. There were two wings of these also. The "Young" or "Loose" Frisians approached the Waterlanders in their religious policy. The Upper Germans had come into Netherlands as refugees from Upper Germany.

For many years these parties maintained their separate indentity, refusing to fellowship with one another. They used the Ban freely against one another, forbade intermarriage, and admitted members from one party to another only by rebaptism. These party divisions were not confined to the Dutch churches but were carried across the border throughout the congregations of Northern Germany, many of which

had been founded originally by Dutch refugees. The strict elements were often called "Fine Mennonites", while the liberals were sometimes known as "Loose" or "Coarse".

But by the middle of the century attempts were made to unify those parties that had most in common. In 1560 a group of Frisian and Flemish churches attempted to work together in raising money to help some refugees and also to unite on a common platform of doctrine. The plan did not succeed, however. During the first half of the seventeenth century a number of unions were formed, and several leagues of congregations of the same division. In 1639 seventy-four churches of the Frisian, Upper German and Flemish united in drawing up certain rules of practise. In 1647 forty-one Waterlander churches formed a league, and in 1649 thirty-two Flemish and Upper German congregations united. By the middle of the century the Old Flemish, and the Old Frisian alone refused to enter into a union with others for practical or doctrinal purposes. The movement toward a complete union again of all the churches was well under way when the wave of Socinianism, which was sweeping over the Netherlands, affected the Mennonites also, and again divided the whole church into two broad divisions.

It was these attempts to unite on a common platform that called forth the first Confessions of Faith. One of the earliest of these confessions was the one drawn up by Lubbert Gerrits, and Hans de Ries, a Waterlander, in the early part of the seventeenth century. In 1630 the Olive Branch Confession served as a basis of union of some Upper German and Frisian congregations. In 1632 the well-known Dordrecht articles were drawn up at a "peace" convention. These latter were accepted also, in course of time in South Germany, Switzerland and America. In 1639 a set of practical rules, not a statement of doctrines, was drawn up under the guidance of Pieter Jans Twisk, for the churches of West Friesland. These rules are interesting as showing some of the social and religious problems of the day. They provided

that in case of second marriage the inheritance of the children should be provided for so as to avoid all cause of discord. Young people should not mingle too freely and should not marry without the consent of their parents. Costly weddings are discouraged. Moderation after the example of Tobias is to be emulated. In business transactions the taverns are to be avoided. Honesty in business is to be the rule. Shipowners are not to arm their ships with weapons. The use of tobacco is discouraged. Houses, ships, and clothing should be without unnecessary adornment. When moving from one place to another members should carry with them letters of recommendation.

Socinianism was an anti-Calvinistic, anti-pedobaptist, anti-trinitarian movement which arose in Poland during the latter half of the sixteenth century, and spread over the Netherlands during the seventeenth. The Reformed Church, being strongly Calvinistic, bitterly opposed the growth of Socinianism. The movement exerted considerable influence among the Mennonite ministers, a number of whom were fined and forbidden to preach during the century because of their Socinian views.

Out of Socinianism there emerged another movement at Rhynsburgs, Holland, in 1619, whose adherents became known as Collegiants. They did not form a distinct organization but were composed of interdenominational groups which met for religious worship. They repudiated all denominational connections. They evaded all controversies and tolerated all opinions not directly condemned by the Bible. Like Mennonites they opposed oaths and war, but administered baptism by immersion. Like the later Quakers they abolished the office of teacher, giving all an opportunity to teach and prophesy. All spiritually-minded Christians were admitted to the communion table.

Since the Mennonites at this time had no special school for training ministers many of them took advantage of these Collegiant prayer meetings to exercise their gifts and develop

their talents. In this way Collegiants who were made up of various denominations exerted considerable influence upon the Mennonites. The door was thus thrown open to the introduction by these liberal preachers of a considerable element of non-Mennonite teaching.

This practise resulted in 1664 in starting a breach in the Flemish church at Amsterdam, which spread through the congregations of the entire land, checking the rapid movement toward unification then under way, and dividing the entire church once more into two great divisions.

The breach began, as just said, in Amsterdam. In this church there were at that time two able preachers, both of them practising physicians, Dr. Galenus Abrahams de Haan, and Dr. Samuel Apostool. De Haan had utilized the Collegiant meetings to prepare himself for his ministerial work and was a man of liberal Socinian views. He believed that baptism might be administered by unordained men, and objected to set creeds and formulated Confessions of Faith. He would also permit non-members to participate in the Lord's Supper. These views were bitterly opposed by the conservative members of his congregation. In 1664, Dr. Samuel Apostool and seven hundred members of the congregation withdrew and set up a separate organization. These proposed to stand upon the Confession of Faith drawn up by Hans de Ries early in the century, and also repudiated the Collegiant influences. The meeting place of this congregation was a house that bore the sign of the sun and so this party became known as the "Sonnists" (the church of the sign of the sun). The original house was distinguished by the sign of the lamb, and for that reason those who remained with de Haan in the original house became known as the "Lammists" (the church of the sign of the lamb). This division into Sonnists and Lammists, liberal and conservative, Socinian and anti-Socinian, free and strict disciplinarians, spread throughout the Netherlands and over into Northern Germany. For over one hundred years these parties together with such others as

had not yet been united kept the church divided and her forces scattered.

In the course of time, however, each of the two divisions brought within their organizations many of the scattered churches. Throughout the eigtheenth century the healing process continued. At first united effort was secured for carrying on practical benevolent work, or for providing training schools for ministers. By 1773 a number of congregations of different parties had agreed upon the statement of doctrines as drawn up in the Cornelis Ris Confession of 1776. Since this confession like those of the previous century was an attempt to bring together the different parties it is interesting to notice how it straddled the controverted points in order to satisfy all concerned. Concerning baptism

"We understand it to be an immersing of the whole body in water, or a liberal sprinkling with water (which we in these northern latitudes consider more generally appropriate since the same blessings are signified by it)."

On the question of the church Ban moderation is advised. As a final resort the unfaithful

"must finally by decision of the whole congregation be excluded from membership and denied all church fellowship till he is truly converted and gives evident proof thereof. However, all must be done with due regard to position and circumstances, yet without respect of person."

In 1811 was organized the General Mennonite Society for the purpose of training ministers and supporting poor churches. Most of the churches now belong to this Society.

Socinianism with its objection to formal creeds and its encouragement of liberal thought on matters of doctrine continued to handicap the church far into the eighteenth century. It was the cause of continued oppression by the Reformed Church, and did much to pave the way for the spirit of rationalism of the nineteenth century.

The Reformed to the very last continued their efforts to destroy Mennonitism, and during these times they made use

of isolated cases of Socinianistic views to bring the whole church into trouble with the temporal authorities. Thus in 1719 they secured the suspension of all Mennonite preaching for a short time. Later they demanded that all Mennonite ministers submit to an investigation conducted by the Reformed clergy on the questions of the trinity; whether the children who died in infancy should be eternally blessed; whether the godless must suffer eternal punishment; whether the punishment after death would be inflicted upon the same earthly body as a new one. In 1738, thirty-eight churches sent delegates to a conference which under the presidency of John von Stinstra, minister at Haarlem, appealed to the West Friesland government for relief from this sort of persecution. The appeal was granted, although von Stinstra, because of some of his writings which were objectionable to the Reformed clergy, was denied the right to preach for several years. In 1795, as we saw, complete religious toleration was granted and Mennonites were placed on an equal footing with the prevailing church.

Although continually hampered in their work by the state clergy the Mennonites were on good terms with the temporal authorities. As we saw, they were liberal in their contributions to the provincial and national governments even for carrying on war. In the war with England the Waterland Mennonites of Friesland alone raised 500,000 gulden to equip a part of the fleet of Admiral de Ruyter. A little later they raised another 400,000 for the war against France. So great was their influence with the States General that in 1709, they were able to persuade that body to intercede with the Bernese government in behalf of the persecuted Swiss Mennonites.

In view of their liberal contributions to the Dutch government the Mennonites were able to enjoy military exemption up to the Napoleonic era. When Netherlands was incorporated into the French Empire in 1810, Napoleon brought to an end their special privileges which they had enjoyed for over two centuries. In the meantime many of them had

already grown lukewarm in their opposition to military service, and after the war no special effort was made to regain their former privileges. From that time the Mennonites of Netherlands ceased to be non-resistant. In 1853 a small group of people still opposed to militarism, under the leadership of R. I. Smit and R. I. Symensma, emigrated to the United States locating in Elkhart County, Indiana, where they are now a part of the Old Mennonite Salem congregation.

During all this period (up to the eighteenth century) the Mennonites had become prosperous and in many cases wealthy. They counted among their membership some of the wealthiest merchants and most learned professional men of the cities. They were industrious, conscientious and thorough in all they undertook. So great was their passion for honest genuineness that "Mennisten infijn" (Mennonite fine through and through) became synonymous for the best grade of any kind of material. In their dress, however, they were not extravagant. Unnecessary ornaments were discarded, even buckles and buttons among the Old Flemish being taken off.

Their worship, like their daily living, was simple. Their meeting houses were plain both outside and in, and contained no church organs. The ministers were of three classes, bishops, ministers and deacons. They were all "Liefdepreeker", serving without pay, and without special training for their work until the latter half of the seventeenth century. The Ban was used as a means of church discipline although the Waterlanders used it sparingly. In some of the divisions feetwashing was practised. They refused to take an oath and go to war. Merchants were not permitted to arm their ships. Controversies were settled within the church and no recourse was permitted to the courts of law. Neither did they have need for courts of law. In 1772 the Chief of Police of Amsterdam who had filled that office for fifty years stated that during all that time not a single serious charge had been registered against a Mennonite.

Mennonites were among the most liberal contributors to every worthy cause. Throughout the seventeenth century they sent provisions and money to their persecuted brethren in Moravia, Switzerland and the Palatinate. 1709 they organized the "Committee for Foreign Needs" which sent large sums of money to the Swiss and helped many to find their way to America. They did not confine their gifts to those of their own faith, but even helped the Huguenots, who were of the same faith as their oppressors in the Netherlands.

During the eighteenth century, however, the Mennonites lost heavily in membership, from an estimated number of nearly 200,000 in the beginning of the century to about 40,000 at the close. A recent writer attributes this loss to the following causes: 1. Riches led to many outside family alliances. 2. The liberal spirit of the age bred a contempt for the faith of the fathers. 3. The numerous divisions scattered the energies of the church. 4. Positions of trust in political life closed to Mennonites caused many to go over into the State Church. 5. The chief cause was the inefficient leadership, especially lack of an educated ministry.

It was for the purpose of remedying the last cause that a movement for founding a Theological seminary was inaugurated in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Up to the latter part of the seventeenth century ministers were unpaid and not specially prepared for their work, but selected from the congregation. Professional men, especially physicians, were frequently selected in the cities. For a while the meetings of the Collegiants were utilized as training schools for prospective and actual ministers. Realizing the need of a trained ministry, Galenus Abrahams de Haan, physician-minister at Amsterdam, instructed a group of young men after the manner of the Collegiants in 1680. The Amsterdam congregations tried to interest other churches in helping to establish a training school, but it was not until 1735 that the Seminary was established, but supported solely by the one church. The General Society of Mennonites founded in 1811

took over the Seminary which is now affiliated with the University of Amsterdam.

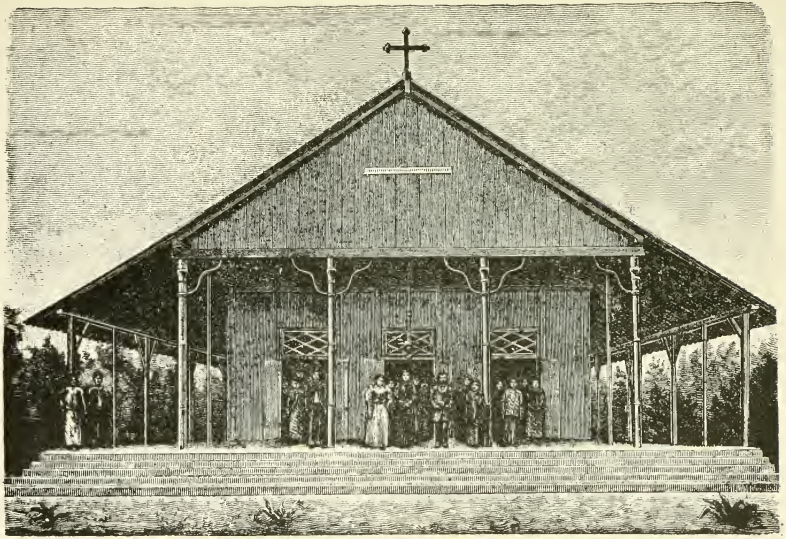
Since 1847 the Dutch churches also have their own missionary society with headquarters at Amsterdam. The work of this society has also been supported by the churches in Germany and Russia. In 1851 P. Jantz began mission work in Java and in 1869 Missionary Henry Dircks from South Russia began his labors in Sumatra. Mennonite churches are found now in both islands.

The Dutch Mennonite church produced a long list of able men who exerted great influence upon the church of their day. A few of these at least deserve mention here.

Hans de Ries was born in 1553, of Catholic parents in Antwerp. He joined the Reformed Church but soon after cast his lot with the Anabaptists among whom he was early ordained to the ministry in the Waterlander church. After suffering imprisonment and enduring persecution in many cities he preached for over forty years at Alkmar, where he died in 1638. De Ries was active in fostering a closer union among the divided Mennonite churches of the Netherlands. To this end, he, together with Lubbert Gerrits, drew up at the request of a conference held in 1581 an important early Confession of Faith which was not published until 1610. He also published several books, and was the editor, in 1604, of the first hymnbook of the Dutch Mennonites. In 1617 he was one of the compilers of the list of martyrs which later developed into the Martyrs' Mirror.

Lubbert Gerrits, co-author with de Ries of a Confession of Faith, was born in 1535, and was a minister for many years at Hoorn. At first a member of the Old Flemish, he later joined the more liberal Frisian Mennonites. He also was greatly interested in the cause of unification.

Samuel Apostool, born in 1638, and who died in 1699, was a well-known physician and minister in the church at Amsterdam. He is known principally as the leader of the Sonnist faction in the quarrel with a fellow physician-preach-



Dutch Mennonite Mission Church at Kedungpendjalin, Java.

er in the Amsterdam church, Dr. Galenus Abrahams de Haan. In the controversy Dr. Apostool maintained the doctrines of the eternal Godhead of Christ, complete justification and a visible church on earth.

Galenus Abrahams de Haan was elected a preacher of the Flemish Amsterdam church in 1645. He was a great-grandson of the co-laborer of Menno Simons, Gillis van Aachen. De Haan was said to be an eloquent preacher, a sympathetic disciplinarian, and a fearless expounder of the truth. He travelled extensively in the interests of his wing of the church and was largely personally responsible for the spreading of the Lammist faction into other regions.

Johannes Deknatel was born at Norden, East Friesland, in 1698. He was of poor parents but secured a good education. In 1720 he was appointed minister of the Lammist Church at Amsterdam, one of the earliest to receive a salary. He took a deep interest in the cause of educating the ministry, and was the founder of a fund for poor students, out of which grew the present Theological seminary. He wrote a number of books and translated a number of others from the Dutch into the German. These together with his printed sermons had a wide circulation both in Holland and among German speaking Mennonites to a late day. He died in 1759.

Thielman van Bracht, a Mennonite preacher at Haarlem, is best known as the compiler in 1660 of the "Het Bloedig Toneel der Doopsgezinde en Wereloose Christenen". The Martyrs' Mirror has been translated into both German and English, and is perhaps the best known among all Mennonite books.

Tobias Govertsz van den Wyngaert was born at Amsterdam in 1587. He served the Flemish church in his native city as minister for over fifty years. He was the author of numerous widely read works on theology, and represented his church at Dordrecht at the convention which drew up the Dordrecht Confession of Faith of 1632.

Cornelis Ris, Mennonite minister at Hoorn, is best known as the author of a well-known Confession of Faith drawn up in 1766 at the request of both wings of the Mennonite church in his home city.

Hermanus Schyn, born in Amsterdam in 1662, died in 1727. He was an influential minister in Amsterdam and also a physician. He wrote an important Mennonite history and took great interest in the emigration to Germantown in the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Johann von Stinstra, an able minister at Haarlem, was attacked by the Reformed clergy in Friesland on the charge of Socinianism. He was finally deposed for a time by the Dutch Government, but in 1757 he was restored again. He was an eloquent preacher and an interesting writer. His death occurred in 1800.

Among the prominent men in the church during recent times only a few can be mentioned. Dr. de Hoop Scheffer, who died in 1893, was a professor in the Theological Seminary at Amsterdam and a Mennonite historian of note. Ten Cate was also an author of a well-known Mennonite history. S. Kramer, theologian and professor, was connected with the Seminary and the University of Amsterdam until recent years.

Upon the course of general church history the Mennonites exerted no mean influence. They were pioneers in the history of the doctrines of religious toleration, separation of Church and State, and congregational church government. These ideas first saw the light of day in Switzerland and Netherlands, but found their way to Southeastern England. During the Spanish persecutions in the Netherlands thousands of Dutch refugees fled across the Channel to England. During this time also as well as later many of the wealthy Dutch merchants carried on commercial intercourse with the English. And so these distinctive doctrines were carried across the Channel. That Anabaptist doctrines were making headway in England during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century is shown by the fact that all the English Confessions of Faith in all the churches existing

during that period found it necessary to specifically repudiate the distinctive teachings of the Anabaptists.

Norwich, whose population was made up largely of Dutch refugees and artisans, was the center of the separatist movement which was making headway in Southeastern England during the last two decades of the sixteenth century. In 1580 Robert Brown had established an independent congregation here. But he and his congregation were eventually forced to flee to Middleberg, Zeeland, where they came in close touch with the Mennonite congregation at that place. Within a few years several other independent congregations developed near Norwich. These, too, were broken up and many of the members were forced to flee to Holland where they were united at Amsterdam. In 1602 John Smythe organized a congregation at Gainsboro. This congregation contained several members, who later became famous in both English and American history, — John Robinson, the pastor of the little flock of refugees who later became the "Pilgrim fathers", and William Brewster, deacon of the church; William Bradford, early governor of the Plymouth colony; and Smythe and Helwys, who became the founders of the English Baptist Church.

In 1606 Smythe and his congregation fled to Amsterdam where they soon came into contact with the large Mennonite church at that place. Up to this time the English refugees were separatists, but none as yet advocated adult baptism. Smythe was the first to reject infant baptism and put into practise adult baptism. Not finding anyone, however, whom he considered worthy to perform the rite, he baptized himself sometime in 1609, and then Helwys and a number of his members. Helwys and Merton and the larger part of the congregation soon fell out with Smythe and withdrew from him, whereupon the latter, together with thirty-one members, applied for membership into the Mennonite church. The Mennonites hesitated to accept him immediately, however, and Smythe soon after died without being formally received into the church. But the rest of his followers worshipped in a house

belonging to a Mennonite and continued in the most friendly relations with the Mennonites during their stay in Amsterdam.

In 1612 Merton returned to England and soon several congregations of Baptists were established in and near London. For several years these kept up a correspondence with the Mennonites at Amsterdam asking for a union with them. Although they had developed some differences in the meantime with reference to the oath, magistracy and military service, yet they were willing to compromise on these matters for the sake of union. The Mennonites, however, who were now strong and influential in their own country, refused to compromise and so the two anti-pedobaptist parties, English and Continental, each went their own way.

Not all of the separatists, however, of Southeastern England became Baptists. Another wing went no further than to merely demand independent and congregational church government. This party later developed into the Congregational church. While the contact of this group with the Dutch Mennonites was not as close as was that of the Baptists, yet it owes its beginning to the same Anabaptist influence.

Quakerism, too, must have drawn largely upon Mennonite sources for its faith. It arose in the same section of Southeastern England which saw the rise of Baptism and Congregationalism, and it incorporated many of the tenets of Continental Anabaptism, such as the rejection of the oath and war. All the other distinctive features of Quakerism were found among some of the Anabaptist and Mennonite parties on the Continent. George Fox, William Penn, Robert Barclay, and other organizers of Quakerism, in 1677 and later, made a missionary tour among the Mennonites of the Netherlands and Northwestern Germany where they succeeded in securing a number of proselytes. Robert Barclay, a Quaker authority on this subject, in speaking of the similarity of the two denominations, says:

"So closely do these views correspond with those of

George Fox, that we are compelled to view him as the unconscious exponent of the doctrine, practise and discipline of the ancient and strict party of the Dutch Mennonites, at a period when under pressure of the times some deviation took place among the General Baptists from their original principles."

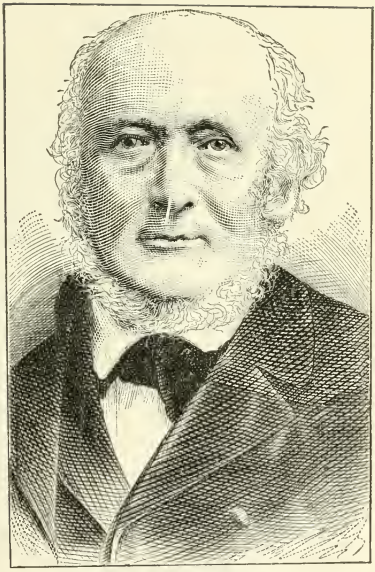
It may not be out of place here to refer also to the relation of the Mennonites to the Dunkards, although that phase of the subject concerns the German rather than the Dutch Mennonites. The Dunkards adopted practically all of the Anabaptist doctrines. The movement was founded in 1708 in Germany by Alexander Mack, a Reformed minister. After leaving the Reformed church he travelled widely throughout Germany, especially among Mennonites looking for some church with which he might unite. Not finding one, however, exactly to his liking, he formed a new one, which had so much in common with those among whom he was looking for a church home that one cannot escape the conviction that perhaps unconsciously much of the faith and practise must have been drawn from Mennonite sources.

The present number of Mennonites in the Netherlands is about 65,000 souls distributed throughout about one hundred and thirty congregations. European statistics usually include unbaptized children as well as members, since in all state churches children, being baptized in infancy, are included in the membership. The actual baptized membership is perhaps not much over 40,000, of whom 6,547 are actual members of the large congregation at Amsterdam. It will thus be seen that the membership has barely held its own during the last hundred years.

In doctrine the Dutch Mennonites have discarded some of the fundamental teachings of Menno Simons and the earlier Anabaptists. They still believe in absolute separation of Church and State, and reject the oath. They also remain congregationalists and anti-pedobaptists. Church discipline they exercise sparingly. Non-resistance and non-participa-

tion in civil government is no longer a part of their creed or practise. Authors of nearly all the leading Confessions of Faith still in use in the Mennonite Church in the remaining countries of Europe and America, they themselves tolerate none, but profess to let the Bible suffice as a rule of faith and conduct. All kinds of doctrinal views are tolerated. Many are charged with unitarianism. The large majority is liberal in its religious thinking, while the conservative minority professes a "Biblical orthodoxy".

Due to the fact that the Dutch Mennonites live largely in the cities and have engaged for years in business and professional life, unlike their brethren in South Germany, Russia and America who have been largely a rural people, many of them have attained places of influence in public life. Sometime ago, of the twenty-eight members of the Supreme Court, four were Mennonites. Three out of twenty-seven members of the Council of State were Mennonites. The president of the Bank of Netherlands was of the same faith. From one hundred members of the Academy of Science they had eleven, although they had only one-hundredth of the total population. The Dutch Mennonites do not live in closed communities as do their brethren in some parts of Europe und in many places in America. This, too, helps to explain their liberalism. With the exception of their Seminary which is affiliated with and dominated by the University of Amsterdam, they do not have their own schools as do the Russians, nor do they bury their dead in their own cemeteries. As just seen, the Dutch Mennonites have furnished much of the literature of the church, including most of the Confessions of Faith, the earliest writers of importance, and the first prominent historians. Among the periodicals now published are a church paper, "de Zondagsbode", and a year-book, "de Doopsgezinde Bijdragen", full of valuable historical writings. The church at Amsterdam contains a valuable collection of Mennonite literature and has recently issued a catalog of the library.



ULRICH STEINER
Mennonite Elder, Switzerland. Died 1877.

CHAPTER IV

SWITZERLAND

Switzerland, as we saw, was the original home of the Anabaptist movement. The term "Mennonite" has never been in common use among the Swiss Täufer or Taufgesinnte. Although they call themselves Alt-Evangelische Taufgesinnte, they recognize themselves as a part of the Mennonite body and in this sketch we shall use the name Mennonite. Since the middle of the sixteenth century the center of their influence has been confined to several of the north central Cantons—Bern, Zurich, Basel and Solothurn. By about 1800, however, persecution had practically annihilated the faith everywhere else except in two settlements in the Canton of Bern.

The story of the persecution of the Mennonites in the land of their origin, the Swiss Republic, supposedly the home of religious toleration, was the most bitter and the most disgraceful in all the annals of Europe. They were relentlessly attacked by both State and Church for nearly three hundred years. The death penalty was inflicted until well within the seventeenth century; they were condemned to serve as galley slaves as late as the eighteenth century; and were left to rot in filthy prisons, and banished to foreign lands up to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Mandate after mandate was passed throughout the sixteenth century by the Councils of Bern, Zurich and several other neighboring Cantons, forbidding Mennonites under penalty of severe punishment to practise their own forms of worship, and demanding attendance at the state churches.

They were ordered to recant and to have their children baptized. Rewards were offered for information leading to their arrest. In case they refused to comply with the above orders they were fined, imprisoned, exiled and their property confiscated. In case exiles returned, as many of them did, they were tortured and executed, or sold to the French and Venetians as galley slaves, although at the same time Swiss were buying the freedom of French Huguenots condemned to the same service. Any one shielding Mennonites in any way, or attending their meetings became subject to a heavy fine and temporary exile.

As a result of these measures many escaped to South Germany, Alsace, and especially Moravia which early had become an asylum for persecuted Anabaptists. But as oppression also set in intermittently in the latter country, some of the Swiss returned to their native land. Near the close of the century both Bern and Zurich forbade emigration to Moravia on the ground that many of the Swiss Mennonites who had gone to Moravia rich had returned empty-handed.

Scores of devoted men and women during the first century went to the executioner's block rather than deny their faith. Only two of these martyrs can be mentioned here. The death of Hans Haslibach of Sumiswald, Bern, in 1571, is briefly recorded in the Martyrs' Mirror. Hymn 140 in the Ausbund also describes in detail the story of this martyr—his imprisonment, torture, attempt of the clergy to secure a recantation; the sturdy faith of the old man,

> "This body you may put to death,
> I'll give my head, but not my faith",

he said; his vision and the prophecy that at his death three signs would prove his innocence—namely, when his head would be severed from his body it would leap into his hat, the sun would turn red, and the town well would flow crimson; the fulfillment of the prophecy, and the effect upon the executioner and attendants who were convinced now that they had shed innocent blood. This Haslibacher hymn of

thirty-two long stanzas, sung entire, held a conspicuous place in the worship of the Swiss for hundreds of years, and is still sung today in America by the Old Order Amish.

The last Swiss Mennonite martyr, according to the Martyrs' Mirror, was Hans Landis of Zurich, who was beheaded in 1614. Landis was an influential minister who carried on his preaching and other ministerial duties contrary to a decree of the Zurich Council. He was arrested, imprisoned and finally condemned to the Venetian galleys. But filing his chains with an instrument smuggled in to him by a friend at the time of his departure, he escaped. Returning to his native land he was again taken into custody. Upon being ordered into exile, he replied that God gave him the same right to the land as to the others, and the earth was the Lord's. At any rate, he preferred to live in his native land, neither did he know where to go. Besides he was now old and no longer feared death. As a result of this refusal to leave, he was condemned to death by the Great Council. The Martyrs' Mirror describes Landis as "a tall and stately person with a long grey and black beard and a powerful voice".

Although Landis was the last of the Mennonites to suffer the death penalty, persecution continued unabated for the next two hundred years. Especially severe were the measures passed by the Councils of Bern and Zurich during the middle of the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth centuries. Beginning with 1640, mandates were repeatedly renewed ordering the imprisonment of Mennonites. The prisoners were to be visited by the Reformed clergymen with a view to winning them back to the State Church. Failure to comply was punishable by exile. In case of return they were to be whipped, branded with a hot iron and again exiled. Prisoners were fed for months on a bread-and-water diet. Prison cells were usually damp and foul, and full of disease germs causing the premature death of many of the inmates. The property of those who were arrested and condemned was

frequently confiscated and given to the nearest relative of the Reformed faith, or turned over to the State Church itself.

A letter written by the Swiss in 1643 to the elder of the Mennonite congregation at Amsterdam states that up to that time $80,000 had been confiscated, and that on Easter day of that year thirty men and women were lying in filthy prisons. The letter further stated that the charges of the Bernese state authorities were that the Mennonites preached and baptized without consent of the State, brought up their children in their own discipline contrary to public law, and never went to the State Church on Sundays and holidays. Another charge was that they refused to bear arms and take an oath.

The Dutch Mennonite churches greatly stirred by these reports sent a special commission to Bern to investigate the situation of their brethren, and to offer them financial aid. The Bernese, however, did not permit the money to be distributed. The Dutch then succeeded in enlisting the interest of both their States General and the Burgomaster of Amsterdam in behalf of the Swiss. In a letter to the Bernese Government asking that the Mennonites be permitted to leave Switzerland unmolested with their families and property, the States General speaks favorably of the Dutch Mennonites:

"They are a highly respected and peaceful people, willing at all times to perform all their civil duties, and giving liberally to all worthy causes, even contributing to the benevolence of the Reformed Church itself."

The Swiss authorities, however, determined to exterminate Mennonitism without any financial loss to themselves, could not be turned from their course even by the Dutch States General. Oppression became so severe that finally large numbers were forced to leave their native land, most of them empty-handed. A Relief Society founded and supported by the Dutch churches, did excellent service in rendering help to the Swiss who were in need in their own land as well as to those who had been driven from their homes into the South German states. In 1671 over seven hundred

persons, men, women and children, including some old men, eighty and ninety years of age, crossed the border into the Palatinate and surrounding regions, carrying practically all their possessions on their backs. Here these exiles endured great hardships for a number of years because of their poverty, in spite of the financial aid given them by their Dutch brethren and the welcome accorded them to their new home by Karl Ludwig, Count Palatine, who had invited them because of their reputation for industry to settle the waste lands in his territory made so by the ravages of the Thirty Years' War.

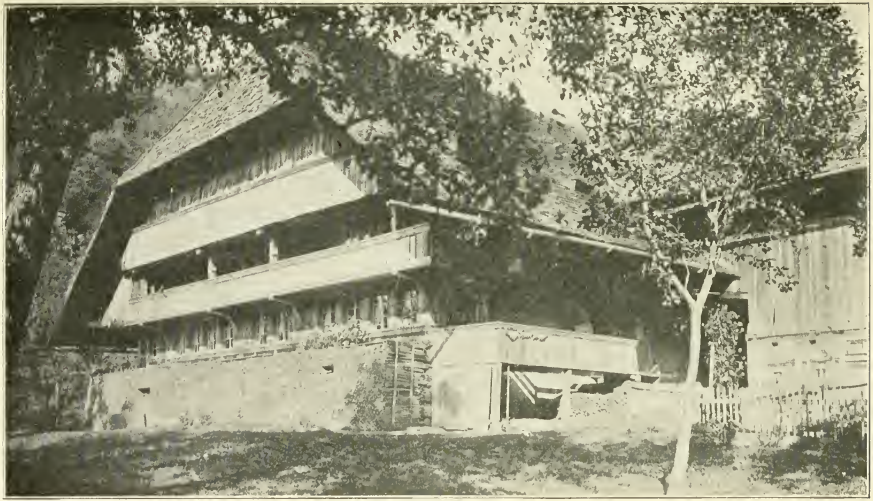
Not all the Mennonites left Switzerland, however, during this period. The exodus of large numbers of those most firm in their convictions during the sixties and seventies undoubtedly relieved the pressure for a few years, but soon new mandates were passed in Bern against those who had remained. In 1688 the War Council suggested that militia musters be frequently held, that all men be required to wear swords in public places, and that oaths of allegiance be taken every six years. Mennonites, by refusing to comply with these demands, could then be easily identified. In 1690 the Cantonal Council ordered that all children of Mennonite parentage be disinherited unless they conform to the State Church. In 1695 the fundamental law was laid down that one's usual civil obligations could not be evaded because of religious views.

Unfortunately the same strong spirit of individualism which inspired these men and women to face death rather than violate their religious convictions also frequently led them to hair-splitting arguments over unimportant questions of faith and practise. One of these quarrels, in 1693, in the Emmenthal resulted in the founding of what is known as the Amish branch of the church. Jacob Amman, a minister in the Emmenthal congregation, conceived the notion that the church in his day was too liberal in its discipline. The quarrel seemed to concern itself largely with the practise of

"Avoidance" or "Shunning", a question that was the source of much misunderstanding even in Menno's day, and the cause of a number of divisions in the Netherlands and Germany.

Church discipline was maintained at this time through the use of the Ban by means of which an unfaithful member was denied the right to participate in the communion service. Amman would add another disciplinary practise, that of "Avoidance". The Pauline injunction, "not to eat" with a disciplined brother, was interpreted as applying not only to religious fellowship, but to all social, business and even domestic relationships as well. Even husband and wife, if one was placed under the Ban, were not to eat at the same table nor sleep in the same bed. This, it will be observed, was not a new practise, but was defended by Dietrich Philip and Menno Simons, and was included in the Dordrecht Confession of Faith which had been adopted by the Mennonites of Alsace in 1660, and which has since become the recognized statement of doctrines of the Amish and Old Mennonites of America.

Amman visited the various congregations in the Emmenthal and in the Jura regions, trying to impress his views upon other ministers wherever he went. He soon came to regard a belief in "Shunning" such an essential part of one's religious faith that he placed under the Ban all those who disagreed with him in the matter. The result was that two factions developed throughout the Swiss congregations especially in the Jura Oberland, one called the "Ammansch" and the other the "Reist" party after one Hans Reist, the leader of the more liberal group. Quite early also in the controversy, the Amish introduced the practise of feet-washing in connection with the communion service, a practise not common in the Swiss churches at that time. The whole movement was one toward a strict observance of the older customs, a sort of worship of the past, and of suspicion of all innovations in the affairs of every-day living as well as



Old Amman Homestead near Bowil, Switzerland, where Jacob Amman once lived.

in forms of church worship. This spirit did not grow mellow with time. The old was seldom discarded for the new, not even in styles of dress as they changed among other people from time to time. And so hooks and eyes were retained instead of buttons, and shoe-strings instead of buckles long after these customary articles of dress were discarded by their more progressive brethren. Beards and long hair, once a convenient custom, came to have a religious significance. Some of these customs have been perpetuated to the present day among certain groups in America.

The feeling between the two parties grew quite bitter. In 1711, while Runkel, the emissary of the Dutch Government, was directing the proposed emigration to Holland but few of the Reist party could be persuaded to accompany the expedition, refusing to go on the same boats with the Amish. Such as did start on the voyage escaped before the expedition reached its destination. The division also spread across the borders into Alsace, the Palatinate and from thence to America. Today there are no Amish churches in Switzerland but there are several small groups in France and Alsace. Near the close of the century Amman and his followers tried to become reconciled with the Reist party, but the latter refused to accept the offer and so the breach has remained to this day.

In the meantime, beginning with 1709, another period of persecution, the most severe for many years, set in. By this time all the other Cantons, except Zurich, where there were still a few scattered settlements up to 1800, had practically exterminated the Mennonite faith. Now the Bernese authorities also, both State and Church, determined to drive out the Mennonites, root and branch. The measures adopted thus far had not proven successful. No matter with what punishment the exiles were threatened, they repeatedly returned to be with their families or end their days in their beloved though cruel native land. Finally both the Bernese Government and the Baptist Council, a special committee created to

dispose of all Mennonite problems, determined upon a wholesale deportation of the prisoners to America from whence return would be quite unlikely.

Arrangements were made with a certain Mr. Ritter, a colonization agent, to deport one hundred prisoners for which he was to receive the sum of $500.00, and 45.00 in addition for each Mennonite actually landed in North Carolina where a Swiss settlement, though not Mennonite, had already been begun. St. Saphorin, the Swiss ambassador to the Dutch Government, was requested to secure free passage down the Rhine for the ship-load of exiles.

Meanwhile the Dutch Mennonites, continuing their efforts in behalf of their Swiss co-believers, again secured the active co-operation of the Dutch States General in demanding a more tolerant treatment from the Government at Bern. After hearing a report on the conditions in Switzerland made by a group of Palatine Swiss, composed of Benedict Brechtbuhl, Hans Burchi and Melchior Zahler, the States General addressed a letter to Bern in which they again spoke highly of the Dutch Mennonites, and refused the right of free passage through their country for the proposed deportation. As to the charges made by the Bernese against the Mennonites that the latter denied government to be a divinely ordained institution and that they refused to take the oath and bear arms, these were answered by the Swiss representatives themselves before the Dutch authorities. Their affirmation, these said, was as binding as an oath and they were willing to support their government loyally; and in war were willing to help build defensive fortifications but not to bear arms.

But anticipating the consent to a free passage down the Rhine, Bern had already sent a group of fifty-seven exiles toward the sea board. Twenty-seven of these, weak and sick, had been left at Manheim where they scattered out to find refuge among their kinsmen in those regions, while the remaining thirty disembarked at Nimwegen, the first stop within the Dutch border where they were cordially received and

cared for by the Mennonite congregation in that city. A contemporary writer describes these Swiss peasants as a "sturdy people by nature who could endure hardship, with long untrimmed beards, with plain clothes, and heavy shoes shod with heavy iron and large nails. They were zealous in serving God with prayer, reading and in other ways. They were simple in their bearing, like lambs and doves, and asked me how the church here was conducted. We could speak with them only with difficulty, for they had lived in the mountains of Switzerland far from villages and towns and had little communication with other people."

Many of them as soon as they had regained their liberty, set out for the Palatinate in search of their relatives and scattered members of their families. Some returned for the same purpose to Switzerland where later they were again forced to repeat their experiences.

Why were these people so insistent upon returning to their former homes? Why did they not take this opportunity to escape from their persecutors? As has just been suggested, wives and children sometimes of the Reformed faith, were left behind. Neither could any property be taken out of the land by the exiles. Some of the more zealous, too, were concerned that the faith might not die out in the land of its beginning.

Finally, after a number of letters had been written back and forth between the Bern authorities and the Dutch States General, the former agreed in a mandate of February, 1711, to permit the Mennonites to leave Switzerland with their families for either Holland or Prussia on condition that they would agree never to return. They were given several months in which to dispose of their property, the proceeds of which they might take with them without paying the usual emigration tax. Those in prison, about fifty in number, were promised their freedom on bail. Those desiring to take advantage of these terms were to report to the authorities their names and an inventory of their property.

Johann Runkel was appointed as the representative of the Dutch Government to take charge of the proposed migration. To his surprise Runkel found considerable difficulty in enlisting the cooperation of the Mennonites in the movement. Their experience with their Government in the past had been such that they were suspicious of the motives back of this changed attitude. The Reist party especially because of the strained relations with the Amish refused to cooperate with them. Some of them declared that Switzerland was their fatherland and no one had a right to drive them out. And so, most of the 1711 exiles were of the Amish faction.

Finally, on July 17, 1711, about three hundred and forty exiles left Basel for Amsterdam in four ships that had been especially constructed for the purpose. The passengers were not to leave the ships until they had reached the end of the voyage, but all along the Rhine individuals dropped off to cast their lot with their brethren in the Palatinate, or even to brave the hazards of a return to their native hills in Switzerland. Those who remained with the expedition reached Amsterdam on August 3, where they were cordially received by their brethren and where ample provision had been made for their temporary needs.

But what was to be their permanent home? During the negotiations of the past year, three possibilities had been suggested: America, Prussia and Holland. America at this time was given little consideration by this group although a number of their Palatine brethren had already formed a settlement in Pennsylvania, and a few years later, some of the former, too, found their way to the same place. Prussia was considered more seriously. The king of Prussia had taken a kindly interest in the Swiss Mennonites for several years. Realizing the valuable contribution the Dutch Mennonites had made toward the development of the Vistula swamps one hundred years earlier, he visited the Swiss refugees at Amsterdam and invited them to locate in East Prussia in a section which had been largely depopulated several years be-

fore by a pestilence. In return Benedict Brechtbuhl was sent by the Swiss to interview the king at Berlin and investigate the lands in question. After completing his mission and visiting the Mennonites at Danzig and Elbing, he returned to report that sixty farms of thirty acres were available for settlement. He returned too late, however, for the Swiss had already departed from Amsterdam for other parts of the Netherlands, and at any rate they were not enthusiastic about locating in a pest-ridden waste. Consequently nearly all of them remained in Holland, locating in several congregations near Groningen. Brechtbuhl finally induced a small number to try East Prussia but these remained only a short time.

For a number of years the Swiss congregations in Holland retained their identity as a separate group, using their own language and maintaining their own provincial customs, and were a source of curious interest to their more modern Dutch neighbors. At first the curiosity of the Dutch was so great that often the police had to keep the crowds from the doors of their meeting places during the hours of worship.

But the 1711 emigration did not end the story of Mennonite persecution in Bern. As already suggested, some of the exiles returned while those that had remained were threatened with dire results if they did not leave. There were still about one hundred families left who refused either to conform or be driven out. Upon these now the Bernese Government turned with renewed bitterness. All Mennonites were again ordered to be cast into prison. Rewards were offered for their arrest, fifteen crowns for a woman, thirty for a man, and one hundred for a minister. Secret meetings were prohibited and no one was permitted to give Mennonites any assistance. One man was fined $300 for shielding his own wife. Reformed parents must disinherit Mennonite children. The installation of a minister was punishable with a heavy fine. Returned exiles were threatened with a galley sentence. In 1715 and again in 1718 several

men were condemned to that fate, but due to protests from the Dutch States General and even the Reformed clergy, the sentence was never carried out. At one time there were over forty Mennonites in prison. And so on all through the century, Mennonites were more or less oppressed by State and Church. In 1734, the "Baptist Council" appointed special agents to scour the country for Mennonites. It was not until the close of the century when the liberalizing influences set in motion by the French Revolution made themselves felt throughout Europe that democratic Switzerland reached the state of religious toleration attained by the Dutch two hundred years earlier.

In 1799 the Helvetian Republic passed an act of toleration granting religious liberty to every faith, and permitting those who had been banished for the sake of their religious belief to return. But even this act of toleration, while it ended active persecution, yet it did not place the Mennonite faith on an equal footing with the State Church. Baptism and marriage were still regarded as civil rites to be administered by a state Church. In 1810 the Emmenthal congregation requested that their own baptismal and marriage ceremonies be recognized as valid and sufficient. But the authorities refused the request, and the next year all Mennonite children who remained unbaptized since 1798, twenty-seven in all, were ordered to be baptized by the State Church. The Mennonites could rebaptize them if they desired, the authorities said, and they might also repeat their marriage ceremonies according to their own customs. The spirit of the times was growing too liberal, however, for enforcing such regulations. When the Mennonites refused to bring their children to the Reformed churches for baptism, they were led unwillingly to the baptismal font by the police. Even the state clergy soon came to recognize this procedure as a travesty upon religion and objected to its continuation.

Finally, in 1815, after a long and bitter struggle of nearly three hundred years, the Mennonites in the Canton of Bern

were granted complete religious toleration with full rights of citizenship. Instead of the oath a handclasp was substituted. In lieu of military service they were granted the right of furnishing money for a substitute. The price they paid for these privileges, however, was a heavy one. During the centuries of oppression they were driven into out-of-the-way nooks and corners of the uplands and hill regions where the soil was so poor that their was little demand for it, while the years of humiliation through which they passed engendered within themselves a spirit of submissive self-depreciation from which they never fully recovered.

Just about the time the Swiss were granted full religious toleration many of them decided to emigrate of their own free choice to that land of opportunity to which their ancestors refused to be deported one hundred years earlier. This emigration to America during the early part of the last century, not only of the Swiss, but also of the French and South German Mennonites was the result of several causes.

Most important was the spirit of militarism which prevailed throughout Europe during the Napoleonic wars, and the feeling of unrest following the wars, which the Mennonites feared would break out in further conflicts and ultimately make it impossible for them to maintain their nonresistant principles. In some cases equally as strong a factor was the economic pressure. The Swiss especially were decidedly poor. As just suggested they usually lived on the barren and shady sides of the hills and gulleys in the uplands. Most of them were small farmers, those in the Jura regions being tenants on long term leases, because when invited to settle here by the Bishop of Basel they were not permitted to buy land. Many were not even able to own a horse, but performed their field labor by hand, sometimes assisted by the family cow. A goodly number were forced to practise some sort of avocation such as weaving, shoemaking or cabinet making in addition to their regular farming in order to make a living. Families were large. Just at this

time, from 1815 to 1820, times were especially hard. As a result of the long war prices were high. Rents were increasing. Black bread and potatoes had been the only food for many. Meat could be had only on special occasions. Even butter and eggs were rare, but now a few crop failures reduced many of the poorer people to actual want. One of the early emigrants to America, somewhat of a rhymester, wrote a bit of verse describing the poverty of the Swiss, one stanza of which reads:

"Hier in dem Schweizerland,
Wie Allen ist bekannt,
Hoert man viel Klagen;
Weil so viel arme Luet,
Die z' keine Zuete nuet
Heu z' saeme tragen."

These were the conditions that made the Swiss at this time turn their eyes toward America, the land of promise.

The Swiss pioneer who led the way to America was one Benedict Schrag who in 1817, settled in Wayne county, Ohio. He was followed before 1860 by many others from Bern who located in several large colonies in Wayne, Putnam and Allen counties, Ohio, and in Adams county, Indiana.

It was during the time of this emigration, too, that another church quarrel arose resulting in the creation of a new sect known as the "Neu-Täufer". This sect was organized by a Samuel Froehlich between 1832 and 1835 in the Canton of Argau and in the Emmenthal. Froehlich had been a theological student, but being cast out of the State Church in 1832, he began to organize a church of his own. It was while he was engaged in this work that he visited the Emmenthal congregation in the interests of his enterprise, where he met with some encouragement from two men who had been fostering a quarrel in their own church — Samuel Gerber and Christian Baumgartner. Gerber, especially, who had recently been installed as minister of the Emmenthal congregation by the elders of the Jura church, was ambitious to play an im-

Combined Parsonage and Meeting House, Langnau, Switzerland.

portant role in his circle. Accusing his fellow ministers of a lack of religious zeal and an absence of spiritual life, he introduced a series of innovations in his charge contrary to the rules of the church. Thus the soil was well prepared for a division. Froehlich, who had a small following of State Church members in Argau was soon compelled to leave the Emmenthal due to pressure from the police officials. He soon sent a representative, however, in the person of a disciple of his, George Steiger by name. Steiger took advantage of the local quarrel and invited the disaffected to join the Froehlich following. Gerber, Baumgartner and others who had already been celebrating the communion service among themselves every Sunday, hesitated to accept the invitation, because Steiger now declared their old faith to be a dead faith, and consequently all who joined the new movement would need to submit to rebaptism by immersion. This was rather humiliating to men who had all along assumed a superior piety among their fellows. They finally submitted, however, and in the course of a few months Steiger won over about sixty members from the Emmenthal church including several Amish, and about an equal number from the State Church.

The new sect early developed an air of superior sanctity and a spirit of seclusiveness. Salvation was possible only through the avenues of their church. All others belonged to the "world" with whom there was to be no religious fellowship whatever. At first meetings were held every night after supposedly apostolic example. Communion was administered every Sabbath morning, while religious services were held in the afternoon. To the government they owed no allegiance except to pay their taxes and naturally they could hold no civil office. This was evidently the Mennonite contribution to the new body. "Salute no man by the way," was observed literally, especially when they met members of the church from which they had withdrawn. They bitterly denounced the old church and ridiculed the preachers as "Bab-

lers, Preachers of a dead faith," etc., and the members were all "spiritually dead".

Apostles of the new sect carried the division to America among their relatives and acquaintances there. In 1846 several came to Ohio where they established a small group of "Neu-Täufer", and later they appeared in New York and Illinois among the Amish where they are now locally known as "New Amish".

As a result of these long years of persecution which drove many of the Swiss Mennonites into exile, and numbers back into the state Church; the emigration to America in the early part of the century; and the defection of the new sect, the Swiss Mennonites were greatly reduced in number. The total Mennonite population in Switzerland is about fifteen hundred, mostly in the Canton of Bern in two settlements,—the Emmenthal and a group of congregations in the Jura district, west of Biel. The largest congregations are those of the Emmenthal, near Langnau, embracing three hundred souls, and of the Sonnenberg in the Jura with about four hundred inhabitants. There is a small congregation near Basel, and another across the Bernese boundaries in the Canton of Neufchatel.

This remnant of a faithful people is today hardly more than holding its own in the land where their faith had its beginning. The Swiss Mennonites are still mostly small farmers, not wealthy, living for the most part on land held by a long lease in the backlands to which they had been driven years ago. Until within recent years, they had no meeting houses, and even now meetings are frequqently held in private houses. Living far apart they often walk many miles to church, and for this reason the member in whose home the meeting is held invites all present to remain for dinner after the meeting. This custom of serving dinner after a meeting is retained even in places where they have houses of worship. Living isolated and secluded lives, the Swiss Menno-

nites until quite recently were exceedingly conservative in matters of dress and other customs.

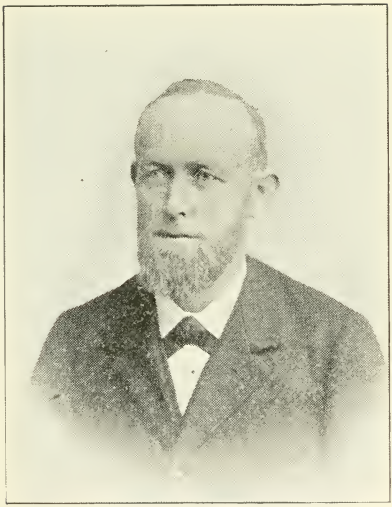
Having no meeting houses at the time of the American emigration they held religious services throughout the circuits in the large barns which were built close to the house, or in the open air when the season and weather permitted. Singing was "ein-stimmig", and the Ausbund with its thirty-stanza hymns was still the accepted song book. Conservative customs and old styles of dress were still in vogue. Men wore short coats, knee breeches, hooks and eyes, and long beards, but mustaches were not permitted, perhaps because of their military appearance and significance. The women vied with the men in the simplicity of their clothes. No adornments of any sort were permitted. All worldly vanities were discouraged, even looking glasses being tabooed. But according to a writer of the time, the fair young mountain maidens lost none of their charm by substituting for forbidden silk ribbons and flowers and feathers, ingeniously woven straw figures in the straw hats which they set jauntily upon their heads. The same writer, a well known German author, after a visit through the Mennonite communities pays these people a high tribute. He speaks of them as "a strong, sturdy race, true-hearted, peace-loving, conscientious and benevolent, loved by all their neighbors, Catholics and Protestants alike. They live a life of such patriarchial simplicity that one must love them. Among them are found no drunkards, no gamblers, no loafers, no liars, no jealous neighbors. If perchance strife should arise among them, it is amicably settled by their elder. They help each other in busy seasons, generally without pay. Their temperate, moderate habits, assure them good health and long lives. Their conduct seems to be prompted by the one thought, 'Keep God continually before your eyes.'"

Many of these conservative customs of three quarters of a century ago have since been discarded. But in the fundamentals the Swiss Mennonites have not changed during re-

cent years. They still lead rather an isolated life and may be said to be decidedly conservative in spirit. They are still nonresistant and are permitted by the Swiss Government to perform non-combatant service. They wear the uniform when in training and a small sword as a sign of their profession, but do not carry a gun. They do not practise feet-washing as a church ordinance, a practise confined to the Amish who have since all left the land.

Of organized institutional life there is very little. They have no schools for training their ministers, being too few in number to maintain such an institution. Ministers are still selected by lot and require no special training for their service. Although they have no missions of their own, they support other societies and have furnished some men and women for active work. The churches meet annually in a separate conference. Their church paper, the "Zions-Pilger", was founded in 1882, by two enterprising young men, — Samuel Baehler and Johann Kipfer. It was a small four-page weekly and in recent years did not seem to have much distinctive Mennonite moulding influence. It has recently lost such Mennonite character as it once had by merging with an Evangelical publication, and it is now called "Der Freie Zeuge," and is published at Langnau by Meili and Cuyper. In fact there are those who feel that in course of time, due to the small numbers, lack of leadership and institutional life, the Mennonites will entirely lose their identity and will be swallowed up by the Evangelicals who already exercise considerable influence among them.

A man of strong influence among the Swiss Mennonites during the last century was Ulrich Steiner, affectionately referred to as "Steiner Uli" in approved Swiss fashion. He was born in 1806 in Trachselwald, and in 1830 as a young man was elected to the ministry by lot. Five years later he was ordained as an elder. For many years he was the spiritual adviser of the scattered members, traveling extensively in the interests of the church. His work was especially arduous



JOHANN KIPFER, Langnau, Switzerland.
Editor "Freie Zeuge," formerly "Zions Pilger."

during the "Neu-Täufer" controversy. He is the author of a small booklet, at one time frequently seen on the book-shelves of the American Swiss Mennonites, "Angenehme Stunden in Zion". He died in 1877, seventy years old.

Switzerland was the source both directly and indirectly of many of the Mennonite and Amish settlements in America. The early settlers in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, in the early eighteenth century, by way of the Palatinate; the Amish in Illinois, Ohio, New York and Canada in the nineteenth century by way of Alsace, Lorraine and South Germany, as well as the Swiss who came directly from the fatherland to Ohio and Indiana during the same period were all of Swiss origin. The following family names wherever found today in America in Amish and Mennonite communities are all Swiss, mainly originally from Bern and Zurich, though several other Cantons are also represented. In the following list no attempt is made to maintain the original Swiss spelling, but rather to give their names as they now appear in America. The early Pennsylvania names of course appear considerably Anglisized as do also many of the Illinois Amish. The later immigrants to Ohio and Indiana from Switzerland direct are more likely to retain their original spelling. Where different American spellings occur for the same name only one is given here. The list follows: Allebach, Althaus, Amstutz, Augsburger, Albrecht, Ackerman, Bachman, Brubaker, Bertsche, Bowman, Bomberger, Baer, Brenneman, Bixel, Bechler, Baumgartner, Basinger, Burcky, Brand, Becker, Biery, Beidler, Blaser, Boshart, Burghalter, Bucher, Brackbill, Christenen, Dirstein, Detweiler, Diller, Eby, Ebersole, Eiman, Ellenberger, Egly, Engel, Eschbach, Eicher, Eschleman, Funck, Fahrney, Flickinger, Frey, Fellman, Gehman, Gerber, Gunther, Gnaegi, Guth, Graber, Geiger, Guengrich, Hess, Horning, Haldeman, Hiestand, Habegger, Huber, Hostetler, Hartman, Hodel, Hauri, Herr, Hauter, Hirschler, Hilty, Hirschy, Hunsinger, Imhoff, Ioder, Ingold, Kendig, Krehbil, Kennel, Kaufman, Landis, Longenecker, Luginbill, Leatherman, Leh-

man, Litwiller, Lichty, Meili, Metzler, Maurer, Moser, Mosiman, Musselman, Newcommer, Neuenschwander, Nussbaum, Neuhauser, Neff, Oberholtzer, Oberli, Oesch, Plank, Risser, Rich, Reist, Reber, Rohrer, Roetlisberger, Rupp, Roth, Roeschli, Ramseir, Schlegel, Shenk, Strickler, Schope, Schrag, Schneck, Steiner, Stutzman, Sprunger, Speicher, Shallenberger, Steinman, Stucki, Sommer, Stalter, Schertz, Schantz, Schlatter, Stoll, Sweitzer, Suter, Stauffer, Schmutz, Snavely, Streit, Schlabach, Showalter, Schoenauer, Troyer, Thierstein, Thut, Verckler, Welty, Wenger, Wisler, Whitmer, Wuthrich, Yordy, Zuercher, Zeiset, Zook.

CHAPTER V

GERMANY

I. Prussia.

West Prussia. Modern Prussia as a political entity was not in existence in the sixteenth century. What was then known as Prussia was a small duchy east of the Vistula, now the province of East Prussia. What is now the province of West Prussia west of the Vistula, and including the delta of that river was then a part of the kingdom of Poland. The duke of East Prussia had turned Lutheran in 1525, but the kings of Poland remained Catholic throughout the century. They remained tolerant, however, toward religious dissenters, and Polish Prussia early became an asylum for religious refugees. Dutch and Moravian Anabaptists had found shelter near Danzig as early as 1530. In the years immediately following, and especially as a result of the fierce persecutions in the Netherlands during the middle of the century, Mennonites came in large numbers by way of the East Sea coast. and settled by permission of the Polish king and upon the invitation of owners of waste and swamp lands along the lowlands of the Vistula and the Nogat rivers, in the vicinity of Danzig and Elbing. The Dutch Mennonites were experts in the art of reclaiming swamp lands by means of dikes and canals, and so because of their economic worth they were given a hearty welcome where otherwise they might have expected only serious religious persecution. The first colonies located upon the ecclesiastical estates of Schottland and Schidlitz near Danzig and at Elbing. Among the noblemen owning es-

tates along the lowlands were two brothers, Hans and Simon von Loysen. Upon their estates at Tiegenhof they settled a number of Dutch Mennonite families, who in course of time converted these hitherto useless swamps into the most productive fields of all Poland. These estates were leased to the Mennonites by successive owners for thirty and forty year periods until finally the latter came into complete possession of them. Groups of Mennonites also located farther up the river in the region of Marienwerder, Graudenz, Schwetz, Culm and Thorn. While the lowland congregations were composed largely of Dutch refugees, among the inland colonies there was a more liberal sprinkling of German, Moravian and Swiss elements.

The churches in these regions as well as those in East Prussia were frequently visited and served by Menno Simons himself, who when he was forced to leave Cologne in 1549 made Wismar in Holstein the headquarters for his extensive labors throughout the East Sea region. In 1549 he wrote a letter to "the church in Prussia". His closest friend, Dirck Philip, was one of the first resident elders in Danzig, remaining there until he left for his former home in Emden in 1570.

Both factions, Frisian and Flemish, were represented among the Dutch Mennonite colonists. The Frisians being mostly farmers, settled in the open country, while the Flemish more often located in the towns.

These refugees were guaranteed among other privileges religious toleration as one of the conditions of their settlement along the Vistula. At first, living in isolated groups on lands hitherto but sparsely populated, they were able to live a quiet and unmolested life. But in time as they grew in numbers and became prosperous, both in the country and in town, native citizens became jealous of the prosperity of these thrifty and sober Dutch farmers and artisans, speaking a foreign tongue and practising a proscribed religion. They were no longer being burned at the stake nor even imprison-

Mennonite Church, Montau, Prussia.

ed, to be sure, as was being done in other states, but they were frequently hampered in the free exercise of their religion, and were not immediately granted full rights of citizenship. As early as 1550, citizens of Elbing complained to the Polish king that "these Anabaptists are taking the bread out of our mouths", whereupon the king hastily concluded to order them out of town within fourteen days. A few of them left, but the town council interfering in their behalf, the order was never rigidly carried out. A little later the clergy, too, added their voice of protest, and the order for exile was repeated, but again delayed. After postponing the time for its execution a number of times, it was finally forgotten. In Danzig, the Mennonites had a similar experience. In 1572 the king was induced to sign an order requesting them to leave the land, but the Catholic bishop whose estates they had brought to a high state of development interfered in their behalf and the order was not carried out.

In 1676, after the settlements at Tiegenhof and the delta region had suffered heavy losses from broken dikes, the Prince of Pomerellen accused the Mennonites in the Marienburg Landtag of being the cause of the catastrophe. God was punishing Danzig, "the nest of the Mennonite sect," he said for tolerating them within her jurisdiction. He brought a number of noblemen to his way of thinking, who attempted to force through an order for exile. The Marienburg delegate, however, realizing the value of Mennonite farmers to the country, appeared in their behalf. "One can easily tell," he said, "whether a lazy, drunken farmer tills the soil or a sober, industrious Mennonite. Rather invite more of them than to drive out those already here." Far into the eighteenth century attempts were often made by jealous neighbors and fanatical clergymen to harry the Mennonites out of the land. But city councils, knowing the worth of industrious Flemish artisans, and both secular and ecclesiastical noblemen whose lands had been brought to a high state of productivity by skilled Frisian tenant farmers usually succeeded in thwart-

ing those demanding exile. And so, while the Mennonites of West Prussia lived continually under the fear of banishment, the threat was never rigidly carried out.

One of the results of the experience at the Marienburg Landtag was a special letter of protection issued by the king, John Sobieski III., in 1678. The Polish kings in the main, unless pressed by special interests, maintained the promises at first made to the original settlers, and guarded their privileges. These privileges were frequently confirmed by successive kings. A typical confirmation is that in the charter granted in 1732 by August II. This charter renews the guarantees given by former kings in 1650, 1660, 1694, and 1699, and promises the Mennonites all the rights they had been granted in the beginning, including the right to worship in their public houses, to have their own schools and teachers, to baptize and bury their dead in their own cemeteries.

Occasionally Mennonites, like Jews, were threatened with oppression by government officials for the purpose of exacting money from them. In 1642 Willibald von Haxberg, minister of King Wladislaw IV, convinced the king that the Mennonites had been the cause of great financial loss to the merchants of Danzig and Elbing, and for that reason their property should be confiscated. The king authorized Haxberg to seize the property. Despairing perhaps of securing the entire possessions of the Mennonites, the wily minister promised to leave them undisturbed in the former privileges upon payment of certain ransom money. The Mennonites vainly appealed to their former charters. Threatened by military force, they yielded. Haxberg received about $50,000 from the country churches and a smaller amount from those in Danzig and Elbing. The Provincial Estates appealed to the king in their behalf, whereupon the king gave them a new charter of privileges, reconfirming their old rights, but whether the money was returned is not certain. As late as 1750, the merchants of Danzig secured an order from the king demanding that the Mennonites close their shops

and places of business. On the side, however, they were given to understand that they might avoid the calamity upon the payment of a certain sum of money to the needy and greedy king. Upon being told by the Mennonites that they were not able to bear any further financial burden because of recent heavy war contributions, the king suggested that they might receive help from their prosperous brethren in the Netherlands. The suggestion was taken, but the help received from the Dutch was not exactly the kind expected. Both the Amsterdam Chamber of Commerce and the States General where the Dutch Mennonites had great influence, interceded in behalf of the Danzig church for fair play, but refused to be blackmailed by the king. The king was obstinate, however, and it was only by the financial aid of their German brethren that the Danzig Mennonites were able to make up the heavy contribution, and thus were again permitted to open up their places of business.

These various charters of privileges did not all specifically mention exemption from military service as one of the early privileges, but it undoubtedly was one of the conditions of the first settlements. In fact, military exemption was not confined to Mennonites, but frequently rulers would offer it as an inducement to any industrious foreigners whom they wished to occupy their unsettled lands. Mennonites were not forced into the army in West Prussia, but were sometimes asked to substitute non-combatant service. At the siege of Danzig, in 1734, they were set the task of guarding the town against the firebrands sent into it by the besiegers, a task they performed successfully. Frequently, too, Mennonites were compelled to furnish and pay for substitutes. Sometimes exemption money was demanded. In 1749 in Danzig, the sum was set at 5,000 gulden for the churches in that region.

In 1772, West Prussia was united with East Prussia under Frederick the Great, and from that time the Mennonites

had a common history in these two provinces as regards their relation to the State.

East Prussia. In East Prussia, too, Anabaptists were found early in the sixteenth century, before Menno Simons appeared in these regions. As early as 1535, edicts were published against them. The earliest colonies were found near Königsberg. In 1579 Mennonites asked permission of Duke George Frederick to locate within the city, but refusing to conform to the doctrines and practises of the established Lutheran church they were denied the request, and it was not until early in the eighteenth century that they established a congregation within the city proper. These came principally from Danzig with which city Königsberg had considerable commercial intercourse. The Mennonites of these regions were never very numerous as compared with those of West Prussia.

When the duchy became a kingdom in 1701, the first king, Frederick I., was desirous of finding settlers for the region along the Niemen river in Lithuania where a recent pestilence had swept off nearly one-half of the Lithuanian population. It was at this time, in 1711, that the Swiss Mennonites were being driven out of Bern. To these, the king sent a special invitation and offered special inducements to settle in his kingdom. Although a committee of Swiss had reported unfavorably upon the lands, a small group located near Tilsit. These the king furnished with necessary farm equipment and also granted them religious toleration including military exemption. In 1713 a small group also came from Danzig to whom the same privileges were granted.

These promises were sometimes forgotten by later kings. When, in 1723, the recruiting agents of Frederick William I. seized five likely young Mennonites for service in his famous Potsdam guards, the Mennonites in the Tilsit settlement informed the king that if their privileges were revoked they would be obliged to leave the land. The king was so displeased with this reminder that he forthwith ordered them

banished. A number found refuge for a time with their brethren in Polish Prussia, but later were able to return. In 1732 the clergy again secured an edict banishing about one hundred families on the charge of Socinianism. These found their way to the Netherlands. Upon the intercession of the Dutch Government and important commercial interests in Prussia, the order was recalled, and the Mennonites were permitted to remain on condition that they would establish woolen mills in their settlement, since they were reputed to be especially skilled weavers. Most of the Tilsit colonists, however, about six hundred in all, had already left their homes for Polish Prussia. With the accession of the tolerant and liberal Frederick the Great in 1740, religious oppression for the time being ceased, and Mennonites were permitted to reside anywhere within his dominion without molestation.

As already stated, the Mennonites of the two Prussias came principally from the Netherlands. Social and religious intercourse was kept up with the mother church for many years, and Dutch remained the language in which religious services were conducted until near the close of the eighteenth century. Shut out from outside influences by locating in isolated colonies, they departed little from their early practises and customs. The city churches made more progress, of course, than those in the country. In the former, ministers in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were frequently imported from the Netherlands and had some training for their calling, but in the country they were selected by lot from among their own number without reference to special qualifications other than that they were usually chosen from among the more prosperous members since they were given no financial support by the membership at large. Ministers were of three classes — elders, preachers and deacons. The elders differed from the mere preacher in power in that he only could administer the rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform marriage ceremonies. Both Flemish and Frisian wings of the church were represented,

to which were added also, in 1711, a few Amish in Lithuania. Frisian and Flemish now did not always refer to original, national or provincial differences, but rather to strict and loose interpretations of church discipline. In church government, the Mennonites were strict congregationalists, although the elders frequently held conferences for deciding weighty matters of common interest.

The first meetings were held in private homes with little ceremony. The congregation at Montau erected the first building for worship in 1586, while in Elbing one was built in 1590. In point of numbers the church in the old Prussias never grew large. In 1774 it numbered about 13,500 souls occupying about 80,000 acres of land. About 1,000 of these lived in East Prussia. From that time to this, there has been a slight decline. Emigration, intermarriage with other denominations, lack of the missionary spirit, and of educational institutions has brought the present number to scarcely 11,000 souls, less than the number one hundred years ago.

Had the Mennonite population in Prussia kept pace during the last one hundred and fifty years with the natural increase of the rest of the German people, the Mennonite church in Prussia today ought to number over 100,000. Many were lost to the church but little new blood was added. A recent statistician shows that in all about three hundred and sixty nine family names are represented, but of these scarcely more than a score or two include the large majority of the Mennonite population. Among the most common family names are the following in the order of their frequency: Penner (527), Dyk or Dick, Wiens, Wiebe, Claasen, Entz, Janz, Janzen, Freese, Harder, Ewert, Pauls, Neufeld, Fast, Franz, Friesen, Reimer, Epp, Klaasen, Regehr, Regier, Freiguth, Albrecht, Nickel, Peters (107), etc. Many of these are of Dutch origin, some of German and Swiss, and there are also a few of Swedish, but not in the above list. These it will be observed are also the most common names among the Russians and the Russian Americans.

When Polish or West Prussia fell under the control of Frederick the Great, in 1772, the Mennonites of that province were pleased; for Frederick had shown himself tolerant toward religious dissent, and had already granted the Mennonites of East Friesland, which province he had inherited, exemption from military service. In order to win the king's favor and to show their loyalty, the Mennonites in the vicinity of Marienburg, when a celebration was held in that city for proclaiming the oath of allegiance to the king, presented him with a sample of the products of their farms: twenty oxen, four hundred pounds of butter, twenty cakes of cheese, fifty chickens, and fifty ducks. At the same time, too, they reminded him of the privileges the Polish kings had granted them and asked Frederick to confirm these. The next year the new king promised them: 1. Freedom of worship according to their custom. 2. The right to erect new church edifices. 3. Permission to establish their own schools. 4. Freedom from military service. 5. The privilege of substituting an affirmation for the oath. 6. The right to enter any line of industry open to others. 7. The right to bury their dead in their cemeteries.

These privileges lasted for but a brief period, however. The growing spirit of Prussian militarism boded no good for the peace-loving Mennonites. The war office, fearing that the growth of the Mennonite settlements would weaken the military power of the State, since military service rested upon land-ownership, influenced the royal council to issue an order forbidding the Mennonites to buy any more land unless the original owner should keep enough to retain the military obligations. The king later modified this order somewhat, permitting exceptions in case his special permission was secured. A census taken at the time showed that the Mennonites owned over 80,000 acres of land. Special exemptions were now also to be paid for. On June 20, 1774, an order was issued compelling Mennonite congregations to pay annually in lieu of military service the sum of $5,000 for

the support of the military academy at Culm. Fearful of further burdens and limitations, the Mennonites now desired that all former promises be confirmed and stated in the form of a written Charter of Privileges. They finally succeeded in 1780 in securing the coveted document signed by the king, guaranteeing practically all the promises of 1773 with the later limitations. The Lutheran state church in the meantime continued to insist that Mennonite privileges be curtailed. By the spread of the latter the material income of the former was materially reduced. Upon the accession of the new king, Frederick William II., in 1789, they persuaded him to issue an edict in accordance with which Mennonite owners of landed property formerly belonging to Lutherans were forced to support the Lutheran parish churches, schools and parish houses. The children of mixed marriages were to be brought up in the faith of the non-Mennonite parent. No more Mennonites were to be permitted to purchase homes in Prussia. But, if a proposed settler possessed property to the value of $2,000, he might locate in certain restricted regions with the previous consent of the king. He and all his male descendants from the age of twenty to forty-five were to pay a special tax annually of one dollar.

It was evident now that both Church and State were determined to prevent the further growth of Mennonitism. Hampered by heavy taxes, unable to secure new homes for their growing young people, and fearful of the future, the Prussian Mennonites looked about for a new home where they might be free to live up to their convictions without governmental restraint. After considering several possibilities, including America, they decided to accept the invitation which fortunately had been extended to them just a few years before, in 1786, by Catherine II., of Russia. Hundreds of families left during the years immediately following to start life over again in the fertile, though desolate steppes along the lower Dnieper.

II. North Germany.

The churches now in northwestern modern Prussia, usually spoken of as North Germany by Mennonite writers, at the time of their early history in the sixteenth and later centuries were located within the boundaries of independent states each with a distinct religious policy of its own. And so while many were composed of Dutch refugees, they by no means had a common history.

Roughly speaking, the settlements may be classed into four groups: 1. The group in East Friesland with the leading congregations at Emden, Leer, and Norden; 2. the churches along the lower Elbe with the Hamburg-Altona congregation as a center; 3. a small group in and about Friedrichstadt in Schleswig along the lower Eider; and 4. a number of churches along the lower Rhine from Cologne to Emmerich in the duchies of Cleves, Julich, and Berg, the Bishopric of Münster, and the Archbishopric of Cologne. The leading congregations here were those at Crefeld, Emmerich, Cologne, Goch, etc. These settlements just outside of the borders of the Netherlands are even older than those of the old Prussias, and many of them are also the result of Dutch persecution of the middle sixteenth century.

East Friesland. In this province the principal congregation is the one in Emden which is also the oldest Mennonite church in modern Germany. Anabaptist refugees from the Netherlands, and Switzerland were found here as early as 1528. In 1530 Melchior Hoffman made this the center of an extensive field of labor. In one year he baptized over three hundred persons. This church also became the home at different times of Menno Simons, Dirck and Obbe Philip, Leonhard Bouwens and Hans de Ries. We have already seen that under the liberal rule of Countess Anne, Mennonites were first distinguished here from other sects in 1544. As everywhere, so here, too, Mennonites passed through varied experiences, enjoying greater toleration under some rulers than others, but never being entirely suppressed nor severely per-

secuted. Up to the middle of the century, they were granted considerable liberty, but later they were tolerated only on condition that they lead a quiet life and carry on their worship without public demonstration. They were not permitted the use of church bells, which was not a hardship evidently, for at one time we find the Reformed clergy at Norden complain that "the impudent Mennonites go to church to the sound of our own bells." But the most popular method of oppression was that of placing some limitations upon their freedom of worship, or ordering their exile merely as an excuse for extortion. In 1626 Count Rudolf Christian permitted secret worship upon the annual payment of a fine of six dollars for each family. This policy of blackmail was followed by the rulers until far toward the close of the seventeenth century. Gradually more toleration was granted them. In 1739 Mennonite ministers were permitted to marry their own members. In 1744 East Friesland came under the control of the king of Prussia by inheritance, and from that time the Mennonites of the province enjoyed the same liberties as did those of the Prussian kingdom. As in Prussia, the Dutch language and Dutch customs were common here until well into the nineteenth century.

Among recent well known members of the Emden congregation was Anna Brons, author of a comprehensive and authentic history of the Mennonites, whose husband, Isaac Brons, was a member of the Frankfort Diet during the middle of the last century.

The **lower German Rhine** region was early a center of Anabaptist activity. As already suggested, a flourishing congregation was formed early at Cologne. For a short period Herman von Wied, the Elector, by converting the electorate from a Catholic archbishopric to a Lutheran principality, secured a brief spell of religious toleration. It was during this time (1544 to 1546) that Menno Simons made his home here. By 1562 the church at this place still had a membership of one hundred. Gladbach nearby contained a Mennonite colony

JACOB MANNHARDT
Founder of Mennonitische Blätter, 1854.

of five hundred souls. The duchy of Julich, one chronicler says, "was full of Anabaptists". Churches were found in Aachen, Soest, Bocholt, and throughout the contiguous regions of Julich-Cleve, Berg, Cologne, and Münster. Most of these early churches were destroyed through persecution. Some survived and others sprang up later. Persecutions were more severe here than in any other part of Germany, partly because of the fact that Münster, the seat of the Münster disaster, was not far away, and there were still a number of these fanatics to be found in these regions. Since the quiet, peaceful Anabaptists were confused with the "corrupt sects," the innocent had to suffer with the guilty. Throughout the sixteenth century Mennonites were still sent to the rack and to the stake by the Archbishops of Cologne and rulers of neighboring states. In 1565, the Duke of Julich issued a stringent decree ordering them to leave his territory. No one was to shelter or feed them, nor were they to take any of their property out of the land. Many left for Holstein and Prussia.

In 1558 among the victims at Cologne was Thomas von Imbroich, a young printer of twenty-five. While undergoing the most painful torture, inflicted by his accusers for the purpose of forcing from him a recantation, he was encouraged by his wife who was a witness of his suffering to remain steadfast. Refusing to deny his faith, he was beheaded. The Martyrs' Mirror which gives an extended account of the trial and execution of this man of heroic mold says, that the "Count would gladly have set him free, but he feared the imperial decree, and the displeasure of the bishop." It will be remembered here that during a large part of the century all the provinces of the empire were under obligations by imperial decree, no matter what their own preferences may have been, to exterminate the Anabaptists. Imbroich was an extensive writer. His tract on baptism was well known throughout Germany for a long time and is still found printed in the appendix to the old hymn-book — the Ausbund.

In 1565 fifty-six members of this church were apprehended and cast into prison, including their minister, Matthias Servaes. The Martyrs' Mirror also gives an extended account of the execution of this man. He was a minister of considerable ability and influence, and was especially active in an attempt to bring about a union of the North and South German churches which had developed certain differences on questions of church discipline. This task did not succeed at this time, but the union was brought about in 1591 on the basis of the Concept of Cologne, one of the early Confessions of Faith. Just before he was beheaded, Servaes, turning to the local ruler who was present, said, "You know well, sir Count, how you have treated me; but I have forgiven you all. It is all out of my heart." A decree issued by the city council of Cologne in 1578 placing all Mennonites under the death penalty practically annihilated the church at this place.

By the close of the sixteenth century, executions had about ceased throughout the lower Rhine country. A more profitable method of persecution, that of extortion, had been discovered. And so this became the popular means here also of oppression. One of the last attempts of this kind was carried out as late as 1694 at Rheydt. Elector Johann Wilhelm was especially bitter against the Mennonites, and frequently demanded sums of money from them. Many of the landowners whose estates they were farming, entreated the elector in their behalf, but to no avail. Suddenly, on July 16, 1694, a company of soldiers appeared at the castle of Rheydt, where there was a small band of Mennonites, and seizing thirty of them and tying them to ropes hastened them out of their homes. After compelling them to march until they were nearly exhausted, the soldiers agreed to release them on payment of twelve thousand gulden. Being poor, however, the Mennonites could raise only eight thousand. Robbed of all their property, they were forced to turn to their brethren at Crefeld and Amsterdam for help. As usual in cases of such appeals, the influential Mennonites of the Netherlands as well

as the Dutch Government and even the King of England, the recent Dutch Stadtholder, interceded for the refugees. King William even wrote to Emperor Leopold in their behalf. The Emperor, strange to say, took up their case with the result that the Elector reinstated the exiles, although the plunder was not returned.

Of the churches still existing in these regions Crefeld is the most important. This church was founded in the latter part of the sixteenth century. In 1604, the town fell to the lot of Maurice of Nassau who inaugurated a reign of religious toleration at a time when all the surrounding states were still persecuting the non-state organizations. Although the ecclesiastical authorities opposed, a number of Mennonites came here during this time. In 1655 the Reformed clergy complained that within a short time seventy families had arrived. In 1696 the first public house was built in a back alley, where the present church still stands. Worship was to be conducted quietly. A special tax was paid in lieu of military service. Among the early settlers were many skilled in the weaving industry. In 1665 the Mennonite family of von der Leyen came here from Flanders and first established the silk industry. From this beginning Crefeld has developed into one of the three greatest silk centers in Europe.

In 1702 Crefeld fell to Prussia, whose king, Frederick William I, in 1721, granted the Mennonites certain privileges, including military exemption upon the payment of $500 recruiting money. The Reformed clergy considered these privileges too liberal and brought their complaints before the king, who replied, "The Mennonites should not be persecuted but should be tolerated both for reasons of state and on religious grounds since they are good Chritians, living peaceably according to the rules of their faith." The congregation still embraces nearly twelve hundred souls including children. From this congregation have come a number of men prominent in business and political life in Northwestern Germany, including during the past century Herman von Beckerath, who was at

one time a member of the Frankfort Diet and Imperial Minister of Finance. It was from here too that the first American Mennonite colony at Germantown came in 1683.

Another important congregation was that founded at Emmerich, in the middle of the sixteenth century, which survived through the trials of all those years, and continued until within recent times, but is now extinct. The Neuwied congregation of seventy souls was founded during the rule of Count Frederick III von Wied in the seventeenth century. The church at Goch with thirty souls dates back to 1550.

The Lower Elbe. A few Dutch Mennonite refugees located along the Elbe in Holstein as early as 1530. The principal settlement was made, however, during the middle of the century in the cities of Hamburg and Altona. This formed one congregation really, although under two political jurisdictions. Hamburg was a free city while Altona was at that time within the county of Pinneberg ruled by the Schauenberg line of counts. These pioneers were mostly Flemish, though some Frisians and Germans were also found among them. At the end of the Thirty Years' War, the entire congregation at Wuestenfelde, one of Menno Simons' hiding places, migrated to Altona after their town and community had been laid bare by that long and destructive struggle.

The Mennonites here were given the usual reception by the Lutheran authorities, and were severely restricted in their freedom of worship, although no longer burned at the stake or tortured on the rack for non-conformity. In 1601 Count Ernst van Schauenberg granted the Altona Mennonites permission to carry on their worship in private, bury their dead in their own cemeteries, and enter any kind of business upon the payment of one dollar annually for each head of a family. In 1641 upon the extinction of the line of Schauenburg counts, King Christian IV of Denmark, who succeeded to the Schauenberg title, confirmed these privileges and slightly extended them.

The history of the Hamburg-Altona congregation, which

contained a large number of Dutch refugees, is organically closely related to the church in the Netherlands. In 1678 Galenus Abraham de Haan of Amsterdam, founder of the "Galenist" or "Lammist" faction in the Netherlands visited the Altona church, hoping to preach for them. The local congregation, however, which had taken sides with the opposing faction, the "Sonnists" decided to test the orthodoxy of Galenus before permitting him to preach. After submitting a list of questions for his consideration they finally considered him safe on such points as the necessity for water baptism, for church membership and for participation in the communion service, the equality of the Son with the Father, and the necessity of a written Confession of Faith. These questions throw some light on the issues which lay back of the doctrinal quarrel which was agitating the Dutch churches at that time. Galenus was permitted to preach but was warned not to advocate any practises contrary to those of the Hamburg-Altona congregation, among others that of observing silent prayer. Through the efforts of Gerrit Roosen the well known minister at this time, what might have developed into a serious division was avoided.

Roosen served the Altona church as deacon and minister for over fifty years during the most critical period of its history. In addition to guiding the church safely through the crisis just mentioned, he also was responsible for saving the membership from the proselyting zeal of the Quakers, who during these years were carrying on an effective propaganda among the Mennonites of Northwestern Germany. As it was, the congregation lost ten of its members. In 1648 he also took a leading part against a movement which threatened for a time to reach serious proportions. During that year, seventeen applicants for baptism had been induced by some outside influence to demand several innovations including baptism by immersion, feet-washing before communion, and the use of unleavened bread. Not succeeding in converting Roosen and the other leaders to their views, these immersionists or

"dompelaars" withdrew and established a separate organization. One of their leaders later was Jacob Denner who died in 1746, and who was the author of a book of sermons much read and used in Germany, Switzerland and America in the days when the reading of sermons by untrained preachers was a common practice among the Mennonites. Before Denner's death, the "dompelaars" had again become reconciled with the body from which they had withdrawn.

Roosen was born in Hamburg in 1612, and lived to be nearly one hundred years old. In 1638, he established the first manufactory of hosiery in the city, founding an industry which made him wealthy. He was elected a minister of the congregation in 1660, serving without recompense until his death in 1711. He traveled extensively throughout Northern Germany in the interests of the church. He also wrote several books including a catechism in 1702, which was in use for one hundred and fifty years in both Europe and America. It was to him that the Germantown Mennonites wrote for advice with reference to the installation of the first minister in America. He died in 1711 from injuries while cutting wood, being ninety-nine years and eight and one-half months old.

Like the city churches in the Netherlands, the Hamburg-Altona congregation included a number of men of wealth. Weaving and the whale fisheries were among the important industries in which the members engaged. Gerrit Roosen was the leading shipowner in the city in his day. In 1713, when the Swedish troops set fire to Hamburg, H. van der Smissen, whose father had come to Altona in 1682, lost two breweries and eighteen houses in the conflagration. In 1674, when a new church building was to be erected, those engaged in the whale fisheries promised to contribute five per cent. of the net profits of the season's catch toward the proposed church building. A catch of six hundred whales in northern seas more than met the needs.

The Mennonites of these city churches were active in all attempts to help their persecuted brethren in other lands.

Together with the churches in the Netherlands, they contributed large sums to aid the Bernese Mennonites in reaching America and the Netherlands during the early eighteenth century.

Holstein. Friedrichstadt on the Eider in Holstein became the center of several small groups of Mennonites in the early seventeenth century. In 1623, the town was founded by the tolerant Remonstrants, who opened the gates wide to all religious refugees. Most of the first Mennonite immigrants came from the Netherlands. By means of dikes and dams, they transformed the low swamp lands about Friedrichstadt into a most prosperous agricultural community. By 1703, the congregation here numbered one hundred and seventy-eight members. One hundred years later, as a result of wars, pestilence, and clinging too long to outgrown customs, the number had dwindled down to thirty. The Year Book of the South German Conference for 1909 gives the membership as seventy-two souls from eight different villages. C. J. van der Smissen, well known in America, was the pastor at Friedrichstadt at the time of his call to the Wadsworth school.

The greatest problem confronting the Mennonites of North Germany during the nineteenth century was the problem of maintaining the doctrine and practise of non-participation in war. The growing spirit of militarism engendered by the Napoleonic wars made it increasingly difficult for those of the non-resistant faith to live up to their convictions. In some parts of Germany, too, these convictions were weakening. The churches along the Dutch border, composed largely of business men living in cities and for that reason possessing more liberal views of life than were held by Mennonites from country districts, and influenced by the Dutch churches in all their beliefs and practises, were inclined to follow their Dutch brethren in the matter of the war question. The Dutch had already practically discarded the doctrine of non-resistance as it applied to war, and so during the nineteenth century the churches of Northwestern Germany made

only a feeble attempt to maintain the principle of military exemption. Although the elders of East Friesland and the Rhine provinces tried to hold on to the old principles and tried to furnish both substitutes and exemption money as before, yet when Napoleon in 1806, at the formation of the Rhine Confederation ordered all young men to serve in the army, no serious nor successful resistance was made to the order. After this Mennonite young men in North Germany were found with others in the army.

Among the more conservative Prussians, however, for reasons just intimated the struggle was kept up for another half century. As we saw, at the opening of the century, these were till granted military exemption upon the payment of $5,000 to the military academy at Culm. But the growing military spirit and the constant menace of a French invasion threatened their privileges. In order to show their loyalty to their country, they frequently made special contributions in times of special need. In 1806, while the Prussian King and Queen were stopping at Graudenz on their way to the eastern frontier, the Mennonite churches of that region had collected $30,000 and had delegated a farmer by the name of Nickel and his wife to present the gift to the king, which they did. The wife, in addition, gave the queen a basket of fresh butter, naively remarking that she had heard the queen was in sore need of such a luxury. Both gifts were greatly appreciated by the royal pair.

During the so-called War of Liberation in 1813, the Prussians were especially hard pressed by the extraordinary drain made upon their resources. The Mennonites of East Prussia were requested in lieu of their special privileges to furnish five hundred horses, and $20,000 above their regular taxes. This, proving too serious a burden, however, the amount was somewhat reduced.

During this war universal service was inaugurated from which Mennonites at first were not exempted. The elders in appealing to the king for the restoration of their former

status declared they would rather pay the extraordinary taxes, and what was even worse, "bear the mockery and ill-will of their neighbors" than to take up arms contrary to their religious convictions. As a result of this appeal, they were exempted upon the payment of special taxes.

Although the War of Liberation was followed by a half century of peace, the military spirit throughout Prussia and all Germany ran high, and when in 1848, the new Prussian constitution declared that every Prussian is subject to military service, a number of Mennonites, fearing for their non-resistant faith, left for other lands, principally America and Russia. Between 1853 and 1859, two hundred families migrated to the latter country. Later on a number of these Prussians came to America settling for the most part near Beatrice, Nebraska, and Newton, Emaus and Bruderthal, Kansas. A considerable element, tiring of the struggle for military exemption, was ready to follow the example of their brethren in the Netherlands and in the German regions near by who had already discarded the principle of non-resistance.

The end came in 1867, when the North German Diet at Frankfort passed a law abolishing all exemptions, thus ending the privileges which Mennonites had enjoyed in Germany for over three hundred years. This law was modified by the King of Prussia the following year by a Cabinet order making it possible to substitute for active service, non-combatant service in the hospitals and the Commissary and Quartermaster departments. The effect of this order as just stated, was to send a few of the more conscientious, who had not already gone to Russia or America. Of those who remained, about half entered the non-combatant service, and the remainder entered the regular service. In the war of 1870, a number of the Prussian Mennonites performed full military duty. In the recent war there were perhaps few who demanded non-combatant service. Non-resistance is no longer a cardinal doctrine in the faith of the German Mennonites.

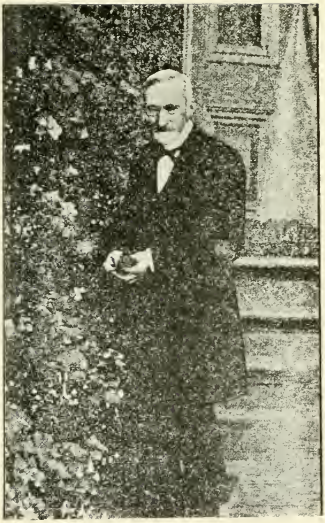
The Prussian Mennonites have not made much

growth during recent years. Several important movements, however, need to be mentioned. The churches have always been strongly individualistic, but the West Prussian congregations have now organized a conference. In 1886, at Berlin also was launched the Union of Mennonites of the German Empire, the purpose of which is to unify the Mennonites of all Germany. Of special value was the founding of the first German church periodical in 1854, the "Mennonitische Blaetter" by Jacob Mannhardt, pastor at Danzig. Mannhardt who was called to the Danzig church in 1835 at a salary of $600 was the second minister in the church to receive a salary. He died in 1885. Two other recent leading men of the church in what is now Prussia are C. J. van der Smissen from Friedrichstadt, and B. C. Roosen from Hamburg-Altona, author of a life of Menno Simons and of a history of the Hamburg-Altona church.

The entire Mennonite population of present Prussia before the recent war was about 14,000, of which about 10,000 were found in the province of West Prussia, 1,000 in East Prussia, and the remainder in the western provinces.

III. South Germany.

As indicated elsewhere, the native German Anabaptist communities were quite thoroughly rooted out in the sixteenth century. Many of the present Mennonite settlements were founded by exiles from neighboring countries. Those in North Germany and the Prussias, it was seen came largely from Holland, and remained in close touch with the home base for several centuries. Those of South Germany on the other hand, many of them, were founded by Swiss refugees and always remained more or less closely affiliated with the church in Switzerland. As we saw in chapter I, many of the Swiss leaders in the early history of the Anabaptist movement were driven into southern Germany where large congregations were organized in the first third of the sixteenth century in the regions of Augsburg, Strasburg, Worms



BEREND CARL ROOSEN

and other cities and villages in Bavaria, Baden, Hesse, Nassau, Wurtemburg, and the Palatinate. Most of these early congregations were broken up by persecutions, however, before the middle of the century. Only isolated churches survived to which were added others later on. The largest of these surviving settlements augmented by later additions, were found in the Palatinate and Hesse in the region of Heidelberg and Mannheim, along the Rhine and the Neckar, although small groups were also found early and have survived to the present in all of the above named states.

In Catholic Bavaria persecutions were most severe. Van Bracht, the martyrologist speaks of seventy martyrs who died for their faith between 1535 and 1605 in Bavaria and other South German regions. The last execution in South Germany was that of a Huterite woman who was put to death in 1618. In the Palatinate and in the Rhine regions, the persecutions were not so severe as in Bavaria. Occasionally there was even a period of limited toleration.

Persecution usually was instigated by the clergy. Reformed and Lutheran as well as Catholic, while the temporal authorities, especially the nobility upon whose lands Mennonites lived as tenants, often took the part of the latter. Many of these noble estates had originally been monastic lands, and being "hofs" gave names to many of the Mennonite congregations such as Weirhof, Buechselhof, Ekerhof, etc.

In order to convince the public of the errors of Mennonite dectrine, public disputations were still occasionally held late in the century. The best known and best advertised of these discussions was held at Frankenthal in 1571, under the auspices of Elector Frederick III of the Palatinate. This meeting was widely advertised throughout South Germany among the Mennonites who were offered safe conduct and freedom from religious interference during the debate. But only fifteen Mennonites responded to the invitation, coming principally from Moravia, Austria and several of the south German cities outside of the Palatinate.

The debate lasted for twenty-two days, and thirty-seven sessions were held. The spokesmen for the Mennonite cause were Diebold Winter from the imperial city of Weisenberg, and Hans Buechsel from Austria, author of a number of songs in the Ausbund, Peter Walpot from Nicholsburg, Claus Simmerer from the Palatinate and others, all courageous and conscientious but unlearned leaders of the church. The State Church on the other hand put forth its best known theologians, well versed in the intricacies of the theologies of the day. The Mennonites showed themselves much the better versed in the Bible but the theologians were more at home in the philosophies of the day. The latter, of course, were declared the victors in the debate by the state authorities. The questions discussed were those which marked the distinctive teachings of the Mennonites, such as the trinity, incarnation, origin of sin, ban, separation of husband and wife, community of goods, magistracy, oath, infant baptism, and the Lord's Supper. The question on the community of goods was inserted for the benefit of the Moravian delegates present who represented the Huterites, at that time communists.

The result of this debate was the usual one. Each side was strengthened in its position, and the condition of the Mennonites was not improved. In 1573, a synod under the presidency of the Elector, declared the Mennonites to be "Zauberer und Menschen so Vieh und Leute segnen und dem Teufel huldigen." They were given time to repent and if not, they were threatened with expulsion. During the remainder of that century their lot became so burdensome and uncomfortable that by 1600, most of the congregations had emigrated to Moravia. The Thirty Years' War also devastated this land and even further scattered the isolated communities that had survived the oppression of the previous century.

It was about this time, too, that several conferences were held of the South German, Swiss and Moravian Mennonites, the proceedings of which throw some interesting side lights upon the religious practises of that day. In 1568 was held an

important meeting at Strasburg at which a number of recommendations were made relating to the everyday life of the Mennonite people. Widows and orphans were to be cared for by the church. The congregations, too, were to help support ministers who were called away in the interests of church matters. No brother was to enter mercantile life without the consent of the church and the elders. Money was to be loaned perferably to fellow members, rather than to the "world." Interest could be taken, but no force was to be used in collecting money when due. The Ban was to be applied to all who "slander the truth of the gospel and the church." If a brother was to be appointed to do police duty in the town forests, he was not to carry a weapon nor do violence to any one. Public drinking and smoking, being an offence to many, was forbidden. Believing servants were to enter the service of church members preferably. Tailors and seamstresses were to make their clothing according to the simple customs of the times and not to cater to the vain and proud fashions of the day. Brethren were to greet one another with the kiss of peace. Vain arguing about the mysteries of the incarnation was declared to be profitless. In the breaking of bread, all were to kneel. No one was to leave the services before the close, even though such services may last for six hours.

In 1557 was held at Strasburg also the well known conference of South German Mennonites to discuss the points of difference which separated them from their brethren in the North and in the Netherlands, especially the Wismar rules of 1554 dealing with church discipline. After these important meetings, there was little intercourse between the North and South German churches for several centuries.

At the close of the Thirty Years' War, however, there opened up a new chapter in the history of the South Germans and the Palatinate especially. That war had greatly devastated these regions and at its close greatly reduced the population. There was again a large demand for industrious and skilled farmers to build up the desolated regions made

so by the war. At this time the Swiss Mennonites were undergoing severe persecution in Bern, and in them the Elector saw good material for prospective colonists. Accordingly the Count Palatine, Carl Ludwig, sent them an invitation to settle on his estates offering them a limited religious toleration and the abrogation of the old oppressive laws. A few came as early as 1658 from Moravia and started a colony near Mannheim, which again became the center of immigrant colonies. In 1664 permission was granted to worship publicly to such as had settled there. The large immigration came from Bern, however, in 1671 during which year seven hundred arrived in the Palatinate, settling in the regions between Kaiserlautern,, Mannheim, and Heidelberg. A few came later. About one hundred at this time located in Alsace. Theilman van Bracht, visiting these Swiss refugees in 1672, reported that there was great suffering among the Swiss both here and in Switzerland at this time. The Elector promised them protection and toleration, but they were not to carry on active propaganda to spread their faith.

The Swiss refugees enjoyed but a brief respite, however, in the Palatinate. In 1688 began the so-called war of the Palatinate in which the command of Louis XIV to "burn up the Palatinate" was almost literally carried out by the lieutenants of the French monarch. McCauley speaking of this general devastation says, "The flames went up from every market place, every parish church, every country seat within the devoted province. The fields where the corn had been sown were plowed up. The orchards were hewn down. No promise of a harvest was left on the fertile plains of what had been Frankenthal. Not a vine, not an almond tree was to be seen on the slopes of the sunny hills around what had once been Heidelberg."

The Mennonites of course were not spared. Two hundred and forty families had to flee. These sought refuge in the regions down the Rhine, and would not have been able to eke out an existence had not their brethren in Holland and

Northwest Germany come to their help with substantial gifts of both money and clothing. Many found their way as exiles to the churches at Crefeld, Neuweid, Amsterdam and other communities. Others returned to the Palatinate to start life over again.

But here, too, they found only a temporary asylum after the war. After the Palatinate had again recovered from its losses, and people again became plentiful there was no longer any need of being kind to the Mennonites. These were consequently constantly hampered both in their worship and in their every-day life during the eighteenth century. As late as 1726, the Elector who had again become a Catholic by this time, said that Mennonites at that time were merely tolerated in his land. They were not allowed to buy land and hence must become tenants or laborers. In the attempt on the part of the Government to keep their number down to two hundred families, a special head tax of from six to twelve gulden was levied upon them annually. In their worship, too, they were limited, and could not bury their dead in the church graveyards. The kings of England as well as the authorities in Holland frequently interceded in behalf of the Mennonites in the Palatinate during these times, but to no avail. Because of these limitations, the Mennonites in these regions were kept poor. Benedict Brechtbuhl in 1714 who distributed money collected in Holland for the poor Palatines reported that their condition at that time was one of great destitution. Many returned to Switzerland, and others crossed over to Alsace.

It was during this period that large numbers of Palatines and Swiss Mennonites emigrated to America. The churches of Holland organized a "Society for Foreign Relief" for the purpose of helping their oppressed brethren to find homes across the Atlantic. The demands for help became so numerous that before 1740, the Society had to suspend operations. By 1732, over three thousand had arrived at Rotterdam from the Palatinate asking for transportation. These were perhaps

not quite all Mennonites nor were all who asked given aid. But then too, others found their way across without help from the Dutch. These emigrants, Mennonites, and others by the thousands settled in Pennsylvania, New York and in North Carolina. The period of emigration extended from 1710 to the French and Indian war.

Not all Mennonites left South Germany, however. Statistics compiled in 1730 show that about Mannheim there were still some twenty-seven churches with six hundred and eighteen families. By the middle of the century also, they were granted greater civil liberties, while many of the restrictions under which they had been living were removed. By 1823, there were still over 3300 Mennonites in the Palatinate.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, a number of Palatines accepted the invitation of King Maximilian to settle in Bavaria. Two congregations were established, one in 1802 at Maxweiler, and another in 1818 at Eichstock. The latter emigrated almost bodily to America in the early fifties. At the same time, too, a number of Amish emigrated from Baden to Bavaria. During the second quarter also of the nineteenth century, from 1820 to 1860, large numbers of Mennonites and Amish emigrated from all the South German states including the settlements in Alsace, Loraine, and also France, to America partly for economic reasons, but largely also to escape military service.

During the Napoleonic wars, the South German Mennonites were impressed into military service by the French conqueror, although the churches still clung to their non-resistant doctrine. In 1806 many young men were forced to serve. After 1815 and up to 1866 in Bavaria, Baden and Wurtemburg substitutes could be furnished by the young men, a privilege accorded non-Mennonites also, but since many were not able to buy a substitute nothing was left but actual service or emigration. At first, the entire church collected money to buy substitutes for all its young men, but finally those having no sons liable to service objected to this method, and after

that each family had to look out for itself. This was the cause during these years of much of the emigration from South Germany to America. By the time of the war of 1870 such as had not yet emigrated had lost their non-resistant principles and most of them entered active service.

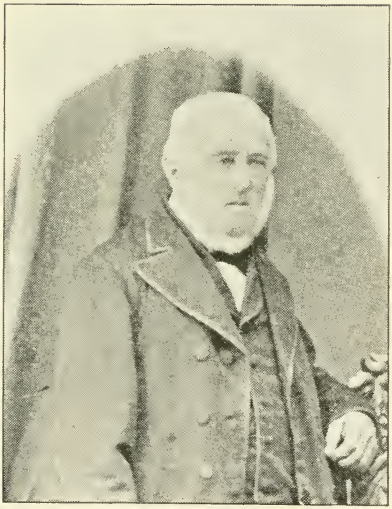
The elders, however, had endeavored to retain the old principles. In 1803, some twenty churches from South Germany were represented in a conference at Ibersheim near Worms at which resolutions were drawn up opposing military service, and threatening all who accepted service, voluntarily, with excommunication.

This conference occupies an important place in the history of the South German Mennonites, and the resolutions adopted throw an interesting side light upon the church practise of that day. Among the men responsible for the meeting were Valentine Dahlem, the talented elder from Weisbaden, and Elder Peter Weber from Neuwied, both of whom felt the need of a closer union among the churches during those trying times. In addition to the resolutions respecting military service, the conference decreed that ministers must still be selected by lot, and any one refusing to accept the call was to be excommunicated. Ministers also must live sober and exemplary lives. Excessive use of liquor was punishable by loss of office and excommunication from the church. Among the members dancing, gambling, attending theatres, and playing cards was forbidden. Marriage outside of the fold was punishable by excommunication, and restoration could be secured only upon confession of wrong doing. Use of unnecessary adornment was made a matter of church discipline. Women must not appear at the communion table with uncovered heads.

Some of these rules were more easily made than enforced, however. It was difficult to excommunicate the young men whom Napoleon forced into his armies, and in spite of regulations to the contrary, men unqualified for the ministry refused to serve when struck by the lot. As a result, there was

frequently a lack of efficient leadership among many of the churches, and in order to escape military service, many of the young men came to America. There were a few men, however, who served as good leaders. Elder Dahlem from the Palatinate has already been mentioned. At the Ibersheim conference, he was commissioned to draw up a ministers' manual with formulas for various functions of the church. This manual was adopted by the churches and printed at Neuweid in 1807. It was in use in South Germany for a good many years, and was revised in 1852. In 1832, there was published also a new hymn book for the Palatine churches, entitled "Christliches Gesangbuch," and another at Weisbaden in 1843. Among other leaders during the first half of the century must be mentioned Michael Lowenberg of Weirhof, founder in 1867 of the well known Mennonite school; Johannes Molenaar, of Dutch birth but educated in the German universities and pastor at Mannheim, composer of a song book; Jacob Ellenberger, liberal minded pastor of several congregations respectively in Hesse, Bavaria and the Palatinate, and author of "Bilder aus der Pilger Leben." The latter was the organizer of the first Mennonite school at Friedelsheim where he was pastor of the largest Mennonite church in the Palatinate, and as early as 1820 tried to enlist the interest of the church in foreign missions.

Of special interest is the "Real Schule" at Weierhof, which was first organized as a boy's school in 1867 by a school association. The purpose of the promoters was to develop it into a seminary for training ministers, but the project did not prosper. At the time of the death of the founder, Lowenberg, in 1874, there were only thirty students, with a heavy debt. During the next ten years, the school struggled through several different changes until in 1884, it was transferred under Dr. Goebel into a first class "Real Schule" recognized by the state authorities. Religious instruction is in charge of a Mennonite minister. For some time, the well known Christian Neff served in that capacity. The school draws most of its



ULRICH HEGE
Late Editor Gemeindeblatt.

students from the local communities, but a number of Russian Mennonites have attended in recent years as have also a few from the Prussian and other churches.

Among other important literary ventures was the founding of "Das Gemeinde Blatt" in 1869. The first edition appeared the next year under the editorship of Ulrich Hege of Reihen, Baden, who remained editor until his death in 1897. In 1892 appeared the first annual copy of the Christliche Gemeinde Kalender issued now by the South German Conference. The recent beginning of a comprehensive Mennonite Lexicon by Christian Neff of Weierhof and Christian Hege promises to be of greatest historical value and it is to be hoped that now since the war is over that the work may be completed in due time.

For some years two conferences have existed among the South Germans, one composed of the churches from the Palatinate, and Hesse, and the other of those from Baden, Wurtemburg and Bavaria. Since 1889, both of these have held annual meetings. In 1903, the Conference of the South German Mennonites was organized which included all the congregations except those of Alsace.

The Mennonite population of South Germany in 1914 was near five thousand, divided into thirty-nine congregations exclusive of those in Alsace of which there are eleven. Wurtemburg has three congregations; Baden, ten; Bavaria, seven; Palatinate, fourteen; and Hesse has five.

It will thus be seen that the entire Mennonite population including unbaptized members of the present German Empire before the war was approximately twenty thousand, less than it was one hundred years ago. One of the chief causes of this loss was the emigration to America and Russia during the first half of the century to escape military service and to better their economic situation. Another weakness of the church was the lack of unifying forces. They had no schools of their own. Their young men went to state church schools

and thus were trained away from their own faith. Strict rules, excommunicating members marrying outside of the fold also lost many to the church. In recent years there has been a growing interest in missionary work. Most of the congregations support the missionary society controlled by the Dutch Mennonites. In Prussia many of the churches have hospitals and homes for the aged. The two papers, "Mennonitische Blaetter" and "Das Gemeinde Blatt," the school at Weierhof, and the organization of conferences, especially the General Conference of the Mennonites of the German Empire which in 1914 represented two-thirds of the German Mennonites,—all these agencies during the last fifty years have done something to unify the German churches, but none exert the same moulding influence over the membership at large as do similar institutions in America.

The German Mennonites especially in the city churches in the north have departed in certain fundamentals from the paths of the fathers. Practically all as already indicated have given up their non-resistance. In 1870, as was seen, many of the North German Mennonites with the exception of the churches along the Dutch border in East Friesland and along the Rhine took advantage of the Cabinet order of 1868, but the South Germans who did not come under the order of 1868 entered for the most part active service. By 1914, however, all had ceased to be non-resistant. Several causes for this change are given by the Germans themselves. First, the Cabinet order of 1868 permitting non-combatant service was limited to the descendants of the old Mennonites only, and such as entered the church since, who were not of the old families did not have this advantage; neither did it apply to children of those marrying outside the Mennonite church; universal military training in times of peace paved the way for an easy transition to universal service in time of war; finally, too, the opinion prevailed that their patriotism demanded that they serve the fatherland. For some time, the church has had a special commission to

look after the spiritual interests of the Mennonite young men in the training barracks.

From the files of the Mennonitishe Blaetter, we learn that evidently very few in this recent war attempted to take advantage of the old Cabinet order of 1868, if indeed that order is still effective. At the opening of the war, for the purpose of discouraging any pacifist tendencies among the population, the Municipal theatre of Berlin placed upon the stage Wildenbruch's "Der Mennonit" written in 1882. The principal character in this drama is a Mennonite living in the year 1809, whom the dramatist brings to a tragic end after renouncing his faith on the alleged grounds that it was not consistent with his patriotism. The Mennonite population in Berlin and elsewhere insisted that the play did not do them justice, and anyway they were no longer opposed to military service. Whereupon the play was taken off the stage by order of the authorities. At the close of the first year of the war, August 1915, it was estimated that 2,000 young men were in the service, one-fourth of them officers. Since the Mennonite population is only about 20,000, that means that one out of every ten of the Mennonite population was in the war during that first year. During the same time, too, we learn from the September, 1915, issue that of these one hundred and fifteen had already been killed in battle, ninety-five had been wounded, and twenty-three had been taken prisoner or were missing. Ninety had received the iron cross. During the remaining three years of the war the losses were equally heavy and finally became so painful that their publication in the "Mennonitische Blaetter" was forbidden by the authorities.

The Mennonite communities in the battle zones in Alsace and in Galicia, of course, suffered severely, and for these special collections were made throughout the remaining churches. Toward their Russian brethren the German Mennonites maintained a brotherly regard. A special effort was made to alleviate the burdens of such Russian Mennonite

prisoners as were held in the prison camps. Before this book comes from the press, communication with Germany and Russia will undoubtedly be opened and many facts on the experiences of the Mennonites in this war will be available.

CHAPTER VI.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

Moravia.

As we saw in Chapter I, persecuted Anabaptists quite early in the history of the movement found their way from Switzerland and south Germany into Tyrol, Austria, Styria, Carinthia and into Moravia, where in the latter country they found a refuge on the estates of the tolerant noblemen, John and Leonhard Liechtenstein. In course of time, the movement was exterminated throughout the Hapsburg possessions, but it held on longest in Moravia. The surviving Moravian Anabaptists all came to adopt the communism of Jacob Huter, a Tyrolean hatter, and were called after him Huterites. Huter himself spent his time between Tyrol and Moravia, and was executed at Innsbruck in 1536, after being subjected to the most cruel torture in an attempt to secure his recantation. The Huterite communities were found in the extreme southern portion of Moravia in the valleys of the March and Thaya rivers. Here except for a short period in 1535 and 1536, they lived comparatively unmolested until 1547, and during that time they received many refugees of their faith from other less tolerant lands near by.

Beginning with 1547, however, and lasting until 1554, a period of bitter persecution set in. Both King Ferdinand and Emperor Charles were determined to completely exterminate Anabaptists not only within Moravia, but throughout the Hapsburg possessions. In spite of the tolerance of the Liechtensteins and other noblemen, they were driven from their homes, and for seven years they

were compelled to wander about in the forests and waste places, and hide in caves and seek a shelter amid the rocks, finding food wherever they could. "Gladly," says a chronicler of the time, "would they have shared a roof with the cattle and swine, but even that was denied them." No one dared under severe penalty give them relief, sell them food or clothing, nor engage them to work. They were declared outlaws, which gave robbers and ruffians a right to attack them with impunity, an opportunity which the latter were by no means slow to take advantage of.

Better days were ahead, however. In 1554 began an era of comparative peace and prosperity which lasted nearly throughout the century, and which was called by the Huterite chroniclers "The Golden Age." During this time the church became prosperous, and added a number of recruits. Some writers estimate that at the time of greatest prosperity, the Huterite population was as high as 70,000; others put the number at 15,000. The latter estimate is undoubtedly more nearly correct than the former. Many refugees came from Switzerland and Germany. During this period, too, many missionaries were sent out to preach the Gospel and invite the persecuted in other lands to come to Moravia, the Promised Land. This was a dangerous undertaking on the part of the missionaries, for Anabaptist teachers were still outlawed throughout the empire. The records of the time are full of the names of these missionaries who suffered a cruel death for the sake of their faith in Switzerland and Germany.

In 1558, Hans Raiffer, a smith by trade and a minister, was apprehended on his way to the Netherlands. After being put through the most cruel torture on the rack in the hope of turning him from his faith, he was tied to a stake with a rope about his neck, and a chain about his limbs and burned. The executioners said they were reluctant to carry out these orders, but if they did not the king or the new emperor would punish them. In 1566 a minister was drowned at Venice, and another was executed with the sword at Inns-

bruck. In 1571, Wolf Binder was arrested in Bavaria and stretched on the rack until it seemed "the sun would shine through him." After singing a song of his own composition he was beheaded. As late as 1618 the chroniclers record the imprisonment, torture and execution in Tyrol of Jost Wilhelm, a well-to-do Moravian missionary. By 1581 it was estimated by one authority that over two thousand Moravians had been executed in other lands while engaged in their missionary endeavors. How reliable these figures are we have no way of knowing.

As has already been suggested, the Huterites agreed with the Anabaptists elsewhere known as Mennonites in all the essential Anabaptist doctrines, such as adult baptism, oath, magistracy, non-resistance, and the Lord's Supper. They also refused to pay war taxes. For a long time, they were in rather close touch with the Mennonites in Switzerland and South Germany. They usually attended important general conferences, being represented at the Strasburg meeting of 1557 where Menno Simons' Wismar rules were discussed. In times of distress they called upon their Dutch Mennonite brethren for help. Although they did not bear the name Mennonite, they must be included in any history of that body of believers.

In one important matter, however, they differed from the other Anabaptists known as Mennonites. They were communists, working together for a common fund and eating at common tables. When a new member joined their company, he turned over all his property into the common treasury, and if for any cause, he later left the group he could not reclaim his contribution. They were divided into communities called "Bruderhofs," (Households) consisting of from four hundred to one thousand people. Their religious officials were bishops, in charge of an entire settlement; "ministers of the Word," preachers chosen by lot for each household; and "ministers of need" who looked after the temporal needs of the group. These officials had almost unlimited power in the administra-

tion of affairs. Children were brought up in communal nurseries until they were six years of age, and after that in communal schools, where the course of study consisted almost entirely of religion and the useful arts, until they were old enough to take their place in the communal scheme of active workers. Members were baptized upon confession of faith only, and supposedly only upon their own request, but since religious instruction became a part of the daily discipline, almost from the cradle children were baptized very early, often as young as five years. Widows and orphans were carefully looked after, and in normal times pauperism was unknown. No one dared do business for himself, but all worked for the common good.

Because of their industry and skill, the Huterite communities became wealthy. Their households were spoken of as Bee Hives. They excelled in farming, stock raising and mechanical arts. From their stables came the finest horses and the best stock in the land, while their cutlery, woolens and linens could not be surpassed in quality anywhere. Their public baths were famous and were frequented by the nobility. Their doctors were among the most skilled. A chronicle of 1581 says, "In this year, Emperor Rudolf at Prague sent for our doctor George Zobel. Through the grace of God, he was again restored to health." The noblemen came to regard the Huterites as necessary to the economic welfare of the country. In 1567 when Emperor Maximilian attempted to renew the decrees against them, the nobility in the Moravian Landtag, by convincing the emperor that if the Huterites were banished, the country would lose its most efficient farmers and its most skilled mechanics, secured a postponement of the proposed measures and finally its annulment. A detailed statement of the faith and practises of the Huterite brethren is found in the "Account of our Religion and Faith" written in 1543 by Peter Riedeman, a well-known minister. This Confession has recently been published for the first time in America by the South Dakota Huterites.

The most common charge against communism is that it encourages idleness. The records show that the Huterite Households were not an exception to the common rule. In 1640 it was agreed in the Levar community in a meeting of the officials, that since there were so many holidays to be observed during the week, laborers should work all day on Saturday. For with too much idleness, they said, it would not be possible to support their wives, children, the old and the weak. Again at a great meeting at Sabotisch ten years later, it was deemed necessary to warn the farmers that in harvest and threshing time they should be more industrious, and should not take from three to four days to do what ought to be accomplished in one or two. The laborers in the vineyards are told that even the neighbors complain "how our people waste so much time in going to work, and those in the lead even sit down to wait for those in the rear to catch up." When lunch is carried to them in the fields and vineyards, "they do little before they eat and then they sit another hour before they begin work." The workers are urged to do their work well so that the church may not lose its good name.

Trading and working for oneself was strictly forbidden the individual. No one was even to possess his own hen or dove. That it was not always easy to enforce this rule is shown by a complaint made in the Dechtitz community in 1641, that many of the tradesmen kept some of the money which every two weeks should be turned over to the community treasurer. One cutler was found with one hundred knives in his possession.

Discipline extended into the minutest details of everyday living and thinking. In a meeting with the elders at the above place, the sisters were warned not to be so proud and not to violate the rules of the church by secretly making such fine knives for themselves with green knobs and pearl handles, for one act of pride, the ministers said, leads to another. Even the young men tried to imitate all the newest fashions, parting their hair like the soldiers, and buying from the Jews all the

latest cuts of clothing. All these are requested to buy only from the community stores after this.

The "Golden Age" closed with the renewal of persecution in 1592. From now on through the entire seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries the history of the Huterites is one continued story of ruin and devastation, first because of the Thirty Years' War, later because of the Turkish invasions, and finally because of persecution at the hands of the Jesuit clergy.

In the Thirty Years' War, a system of plundering was inaugurated by both armies which completely ravished the lands through which the wandering bands of soldiers marched. The Huterite Households because of their fine horses, fat cattle and well-filled granaries, were singled out as especially desirable prizes. In 1619 twelve Households were completely burned to the ground; seventeen others greatly damaged; forty men and women were cut down in cold blood, and two hundred horses and all their cattle, swine and sheep were driven away. "Many dear people," the chronicler says, "were cut down so cruelly and tortured so unmercifully as to cause such distress and misery as no man can conceive." The next year the community at Pribitz was attacked by fifteen hundred troops and completely destroyed. In three hours fifty-two of the men were killed, and seventeen men and women so badly mutilated that they died within a few days. Every sort of cruel and inhuman punishment was resorted to by the marauders. For the purpose of securing money, they "burned them with hot irons and flaming torches, poured hot grease over their bare bodies, cut deep wounds into their flesh, which they then filled with powder and ignited it, jerked off their fingers, slashed into them with their swords as if they were cabbage heads. One brother's head they twisted completely around so that he faced straight backward."

On top of these terrible sufferings from the fortunes of war, came the imperial order in September, 1622, that within four weeks they must all leave the land on penalty of severe

punishment. The tolerant Liechtensteins on whose estates they had settled one hundred years earlier, had in the meantime been succeeded by the bigoted family of Deitrichstein and it was through the influence of Cardinal van Deitrichstein that the imperial order was issued. The poor people plead that they might at least be given until the next spring to leave, but all in vain. In the midst of a cold winter they were chased, some twenty thousand of them, empty-handed across the border to search for new homes. Some of them located in Hungary, where a group of their brethren had started a community at Sabotisch as early as 1546. Others upon invitation from the prince founded a settlement at Alwintz, in the principality of Siebenbergen.

But even here they fared little better than before. Their communities were overrun at first by imperial troops throughout the Thirty Years' War, and after 1648 by Turks and Tartars who made occasional raids into these regions, throughout the latter half of the century. Many of the men were killed, and many of the women and children were carried away by the Turks as captives often to meet a fate worse than death. So great became the misery and poverty of the Huterites finally that in 1639, they were compelled to seek aid from the Dutch Mennonites. In 1667, too, because of severe trials they were forced to give up their communism, and each family had to shift for itself.

With 1674 also began an aggressive campaign on the part of the Jesuit clergy to force the Huterites back into the Catholic church. Despairing of converting the adults, they hoped to destroy the faith by gaining control of the youth. In 1688 children were ordered to be baptized, orders which were repeatedly disobeyed and renewed during the next half century, and which led to many imprisonments. In course of time, too, the Huterites were forbidden to hold meetings of their own, and ordered to attend those of the Jesuits. Their members had to be married by the officials of the state church. Their own schools were put under the ban. Books dealing

with their own faith were confiscated while those of the Catholic faith were supplied.

As a result of these measures, a number of the brethren were won back into the church, but were permitted to retain certain features of their faith including non-resistance and a somewhat separate organization. These were popularly known as "Habaner," but were spoken of as "Step-brothers" by the Huterite chronicler. Others left for Prussia and Holland.

The number of the faithful as a result of all these measures was greatly reduced in Hungary. By 1750 in Sabotisch and Levar, the leading settlements, there were left only four hundred members, and these were unable to hold out much longer against the persistent oppression of the Jesuits. Finally by 1767 nearly all left Hungary and Siebengergen for Wallachia where they hoped to begin life anew. But here, too, they were unfortunate. The Russian-Turkish war reduced them to great misery. They finally came under the notice of the Russian Field Marshal, Count Romanizov, who in 1770, invited them to settle on his own estates in the province of Tschernigof, at Wischenka, near Baturin on the Desna river, where they again organized their communism.

Here they remained for some time until after the death of Romanizov in 1796. The count's successor attempted to reduce the Huterites to serfdom, whereupon they left their homes again and settled upon Crown lands at Radichew. In the meantime at the latter place a division occurred among them. About half of their number following the lead of Jacob Walter left the community and settled upon homes of their own. The remnant finally in 1842 removed to Crown lands in the Molotschna where they first founded the community of Huterthal. Ten years later another community was organized at Johannesruh, and several years later two more groups were formed. Finally in 1874, upon the introduction of universal military service in Russia these people emi-

grated bodily to America, settling in several localities in the James river valley in South Dakota.

Galicia.

The only Mennonites left in modern Austria-Hungary today are to be found in Galicia in the region of Lemberg. These have no historical connection with the Huterites, but are the descendants of the Swiss and German immigrants in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Emperor Joseph in 1781, like the Empress of Russia a few years later, issued a patent inviting industrious German settlers to locate on his poorly cultivated estates in Galicia, which had been his share of the booty in the recent partitioning of Poland. Large numbers of Germans accepted the invitation settling in all some one hundred and fifty colonies. Among these in 1784 were twenty-eight Mennonite families from Hesse and Switzerland, all originally of Swiss descent. They formed three small colonies at Einsidel, Falkenstein and Rosenberg.

The terms offered by the Emperor were exceedingly liberal. The Mennonites were granted religious toleration and military exemption. Each family was granted a farm of thirty to forty acres, including buildings and sufficient money for equipment, besides tax exemption for ten years. Unfortunately these twenty odd families could not stand prosperity, for they soon fell to quarreling among themselves. Some of them may have been of the Amish or conservative Mennonite persuasion, for they were divided into the "hookers" and the "buttoners." As a result ten families left in the beginning of the last century for Russia.

During the next three quarters of a century, however, the small colonies maintained a steady growth. During the middle years three new colonies were established nearby,—Neuhof, Horozona, and Kiernica. During the early eighties desire to better their material condition, spurred on by irresponsible agents of the big steamship companies induced about fifty families, about half of the entire population, to

emigrate to America. These settled in Butterfield, Minnesota, but later some went to Kansas. The entire Mennonite population at this time was about seven hundred. The remaining members became still more widely scattered. The same economic pressure led others to leave their small farms and venture to buy large estates, while those who could not purchase estates entered upon them as tenants. In this way the original compact colonies have become widely scattered. In 1912, the total Mennonite population in Galicia was five hundred and ninety-one, of whom three hundred and ninety-six were baptized members, living in one hundred and one hamlets and villages, in the general region of Lemberg. Services were held alternately in nine different localities within a distance of from twenty to one hundred miles from the capital city. In 1911 a church was erected in Lemberg which is the most accessible for the largest number of the scattered members. Practically the only church institution is a fund for supporting educated ministers established by Peter Kintzi in 1905. In 1912 the bishop was Heinrich Pauls, educated at the missionary school at Basel and at the university at Halle. In 1913 Pauls sent out invitations to all the leading Mennonites of the world for a world conference to be held at Lemberg, but the response was not sufficiently favorable to justify the calling of the conference.

During the recent war, the Galician Mennonite settlements were in the very center of the battle zone in 1915 and 1916, and the community suffered serious loss, while a number of their men either fell in battle or were carried away by the Russians.

CHAPTER VII.

RUSSIA.

To the student of Mennonite affairs the history of the Russian Mennonites furnishes a pleasing contrast to that of their brethren in the other countries already mentioned. Instead of persecution and repression they meet here in the land of the most arbitrary ruler of Europe the greatest encouragement to expand their settlements and the greatest liberty to practise their beliefs according to their convictions. They furnish an interesting example, too, of the course Mennonitism would take where it is free to apply its principles, economic and political as well as religious to every-day life.

The Mennonites of Russia are Germans, and the first settlements were made during the reign of Catherine the Great, who became ruler of all the Russias in 1763. Catherine, although unprincipled and cruel, was a woman of remarkable ability and political foresight, and did much for the political and industrial development of her empire. During her reign she extended the confines of her empire to the Black and Caspian seas at the expense of Turkey with whom she carried on several wars. These regions were inhabited by half-wild, nomadic bands of Turks and Tartars, and much of the conquered territory became Crown land, which she wished to develop to its fullest extent. Being herself a German, she naturally turned to overcrowded Germany, appealing especially to oppressed people for model colonists for her territories on the broad steppes in Southern Russia. In an invitation of 1763 especially liberal terms were offered all German colonists. All emigrants were promised free transportation; religious toleration with the right to establish their

own schools, churches and forms of local government; loans to establish factories and other industries, and military exemption.

As a result of these inviting terms thousands of Germans, mostly Prussians, of every faith found their way into South Russia, during the next forty years. Especially attractive, however, was the offer to those religious sects who were more or less restricted in their religious and civil liberties under Prussian rule. One of the first of these groups was a colony of Moravian brethren who established a colony for missionary purposes along the Mohammedan frontier near Saratov in 1763. The Huterites, too, as we saw, left Moravia in 1767, settling in Wallachia near Bucharest. But falling prey to the robber bands, which followed in the wake of the Turkish wars, they fled from their brief resting place, and after wandering about for a short time they finally found an asylum in Russia on the estates of a nobleman, Count Romanizov, at Wishenka, in the province of Tscheringov. Here they prospered and remained until 1800, when in order to escape serfdom at the hands of the successor to their benefactor, they moved upon Crown lands some few miles north where they organized a colony of five Bruderhofs. They finally fell to quarreling among themselves and one part emigrated to the Chortitz colony, while the remainder, in 1842, emigrated to Melitopol in Taurien where they founded Huterthal near the Molotschna colony. In 1853 Johannesberg was established nearby, and a few years later in 1857, Hutersdorf and New Hutersthal respectively. These groups emigrated to America in 1874.

A special invitation was extended to the Mennonites of West Prussia in 1786. Just a few years preceding, Catherine had wrested additional territory from Turkey about the Azov sea—present Crimea and Taurien. In Taurien alone 500,000 acres became Crown lands. Upon these she desired to place industrious farmers whose farms might serve as models for the surrounding nomadic tribes. She had perhaps learned of the industrious Mennonites and how they had de-

veloped the lowlands of the Vistula through her generals who had spent several winters in West Prussia during the Seven Years' War. At any rate in the above mentioned year a special invitation was given by Catherine to the Mennonites of the Vistula, through her consul at Danzig to settle on her Crown lands in South Russia. Coming just when it did, at a time when their religious liberties were being restricted by their own Government, the West Prussian churches regarded this offer as an act of Providence. Two deputies, Jacob Hoeppner and Johann Bartch, were immediately sent, though only semi-officially because of opposition from the Prussian Government, to investigate the new locality. Accompanied by George van Trappe, the Russian agent, these men left immediately in the fall of 1786, and returned one year later after thoroughly investigating various sites along the lower Dnieper, and meeting the Empress and the Crown Prince Paul, as well as Prince Potempkin the governor of New Russia. Liberal terms were promised at St. Petersburg to all Mennonites who should desire to emigrate, such as religious toleration including military exemption, sixty-five dessiatines (175 acres) of land for each family, use of the Crown forests, tax exemption for ten years, and no Crown dues after that, but an annual fee of fifteen kopeks (seven and one-half cents) per dessiatine, a monopoly of the distilleries and breweries within any settlement (belonging otherwise to the nobility only), free transportation to their new homes, a loan of five hundred rubles ($250.00) to each family, and support for each family at the rate of ten kopeks per day for each person until the first harvest.

Through the efforts of the returned deputies, and especially the Russian agent, van Trappe, great interest was aroused in the proposed emigration throughout the Vistula churches. The Prussian Government, however, while hampering the further growth of the Mennonites, yet was not willing to lose such prosperous and industrious farmers. Passports were consequently withheld from those who had

property, and so the first Russian colony was made up entirely of the poorer people. By the fall of 1788 over two hundred families had begun the long journey by way of the Baltic to Riga and then overland to the Dnieper, down that stream to the site selected for them on the Chortitz, a small branch joining the Dnieper about fifty miles below the town of Ekaterinoslav in the province of the same name.

The first winter they were forced to spend enroute at Dubrowna, because of threatened dangers of Turkish raids upon their frontier settlements, since war was being waged against Turkey at this time. While here their number was increased to two hundred and twenty-eight families, all of whom were supported by the Russian Government until they reached their home on the Chortitz in the summer of 1789. Later colonists came directly overland from Danzig by way of Brest-Litovsk, Ostrog and Ekaterinoslav, the journey lasting about twenty days. In 1797 one hundred and eighteen more families came, and by 1800 the colony numbered over four hundred families.

Chortitz

The Chortitz region was hilly with a rather barren, rocky soil without any trees, but heavily covered with grass and well-adapted to stock raising. Being poor and inexperienced in the best methods of cultivating their new farms, these first colonies suffered the usual hardships of pioneers. Eight villages were laid out. The first houses were made of mud walls with thatched roofs. A long rainy spell during the first August did not add to their comfort. Their food was poor, consisting largely of a mush made from a mouldy rye flour secured from distant Russian supply granaries. A number died of dysentery in the early period. Government support now that they had reached their destination was meager. During the first winter, however, many families had to be cared for by the Government in the nearby fort of Alexandrowsk. The usual frontier lawlessness also added to their hardships. The country abounded in vagabonds and lawless

characters. The baggage of the settlers such as reached them at all either was spoiled by the rains or pillaged by thieves. These conditions prevailed for several years. A contemporary writer calls them "blut arm an Leib und Seele." At their first communion in 1790, their elder, Penner, felt sorely grieved at the necessity of officiating without proper footwear, owning nothing at the time but a pair of "Bastel schue" the usual footwear in the days of poverty. Several of the slightly more prosperous members finally by dint of considerable effort gathered together a pair of boots for him for the occasion. Loud were the sobs, it is said, that were heard throughout the audience as the participants at this first communion were reminded in their present miserable condition of the happy homes they had left behind in Prussia. In 1803, their distress was relieved somewhat by material aid furnished them by wealthier colonists who remained with them for a short time on their way to a new settlement on the Molotschna.

Many of the first settlers had expected to become rich within a few years. In their disappointment they naturally turned against the leaders of the whole movement, Hoeppner and Bartsch, as the cause of their distress. Hoeppner with more means than most of the others had secured for himself a choice bit of land on the wooded island in the Chortitz, on which he built a house more substantial than others could afford. The discontented element conspired against him, charging him with using his position in the colony in his own interest. They finally secured the expulsion of both Hoeppner and Bartsch from the church, and brought about the arrest of Hoeppner who was sent to prison for one year at Ostrog, after which he was released by the order of Emperor Alexander I. After his release he refused to rejoin the colony, but became a citizen of the nearby town of Alexandrowsk. He spent the last years of his life with his son and before his death asked to be buried on his own estate, and not in the common cemetery by the side of those who had

caused him so much trouble in his early career. But time heals all wounds. In 1889 on the one-hundreth anniversary of the founding of the colony, the grandchildren of the men who drove Hoeppner to prison erected a monument to his memory on the spot of his burial.

In 1796 Catherine died and was succeeded by her son Paul I. The colonists fearing that their special privileges might not be respected by the new ruler sent their elder, David Epp, and Gerhard Willems to St. Petersburg to secure a written confirmation of the promises made by Catherine. After a two years' stay at the capital, these men finally secured from Paul in 1800 a written charter confirming in perpetuity all their privileges. This document preserved for many years in a fire-proof building at Chortitz is now to be found in the town hall.

This guarantee again revived the interest among the West Prussian churches in emigration. In 1803, a new colony was founded farther down the Dnieper along the Molotschna, which empties into the former a short distance north of the Sea of Azov, in the province of Taurien. During the first year three hundred and forty-two families came from Prussia and grouped themselves into eighteen villages. Some of the Chortitz settlers also removed to the new colony. By 1840 there were eleven hundred and fifty families embracing about six thousand people, in the Molotschna settlement. In that year the special inducements offered to immigrants ceased, and only small numbers came after that. The Chortitz settlement is now frequently referred to as the Old Colony.

The Molotschna Colony.

The Molotschna region, too, was a level, treeless steppe with a fertile soil, and was well toward the outskirts of civilization. Just to the south were still to be found bands of half-wild, nomadic Tartars who hated the frontier settlers as our Indians did the American pioneers. They frequently made raids upon the Mennonite settlements and drove off their cattle. At one time they murdered four men, after which the

Government forbade them to carry their weapons which consisted of long poles, spiked and weighted at the ends, a weapon used by them in the hunt.

The Molotschnaites, unlike their brethren of the Old Colony, were from the wealthier class in Prussia, and prospered from the beginning. Many of them brought with them in their covered wagons, drawn by five or seven horses, costly furniture and household goods. Some had disposed of valuable estates before they left and after paying the ten per cent. emigration fee required of the emigrants still had large sums of money for which they found a ready demand among their more needy brethren. Out of three hundred and twenty-two families only sixty-three accepted the aid offered them by the Russian authorities. Taganrog was the principal market for their dairy products until Berdiansk was founded on the Azov in 1833.

In addition to these two large colonies several smaller independent Mennonite groups had been established in other parts of Russia in the meantime. One of the first of these was a colony of Swiss Palatines, who had been the first to accept the liberal terms of Catherine a few years even before the settlement at Chortitz. These Palatines had come to Galicia in the seventies of the eighteenth century, and about 1785 had settled at Wymischle in Poland. Later a number removed to Volhynia, near Ostrog, from which place they emigrated to America in 1874. A small group of Prussians, too, had remained in the same region in Poland in 1788 from whence they emigrated to Volhynia in 1802. These also joined the exodus to America later.

All these colonists took their religion with them wherever they went. The Chortitz band left Prussia without a preacher among them, however, for the reason that since preachers received no support at that time they were usually chosen from among the well-to-do. But in 1788 the Prussian Government refused passports to all but the poor. During their enforced stop-over at Dubrowna, however, in the

winter of 1788, they sent an urgent request to the home church for ministers and elders in order that they might carry on regular religious services, and especially the communion service. The fact, too, that ten couples were anxiously waiting to be married may have added urgency to the request. A meeting was called of the home churches in Prussia, but since none of the elders cared to undertake the long journey, they advised the emigrants to select from among their number several men qualified to carry on their worship from whom ministers might later be selected.

But the demand for an elder being persistent, at a large meeting of the Prussian churches the elders suggested that the colonists send in sixteen names from which four ministers and two deacons would be appointed. Out of twenty names thus sent in, that of Bernhard Penner, was selected as the first minister at Chortitz. According to the established custom, an elder could not be thus selected, and consequently Peter Epp, elder of the Danzig church, decided to make the journey to Russia, contrary to the wishes of his own congregation. Epp died, however, without fulfilling his mission, whereupon the Prussian elders decided to waive for once the established custom, and declared Penner an elder by written authority. Penner, however, soon died, but before his death he had ordained Jacob Wiebe. Wiebe, however, claiming himself unqualified for the position induced David Epp to assume the responsibility, meanwhile ordaining him. This roundabout method of securing an elder caused a great deal of dissatisfaction among the Russians, many of whom refused to recognize Epp. In the interests of harmony two men, Jacob Wiebe and Jacob van Bargen, were sent to Prussia to secure an elder regularly ordained.

The Prussian churches sent Elder Cornelius Regier and minister Cornelius Warkentin back to Chortitz to administer to all the religious needs of the community and settle all their differences. These men arrived at Chortitz in the spring of 1794, and were cordially received by all parties. They inter-

viewed Hoeppner and Bartsch against whom various charges had been lodged, patched up a number of quarrels, visited all villages, and baptized thirteen applicants in the Frisian church and thirty-one in the Flemish. In the meantime Regier died, but before his death he had ordained Warkentin as elder, who remained for sometime longer, and who did much to reconcile the colonists to their new home. Before he returned to Prussia he ordained two elders, David Epp and Johann Wiebe. And thus the organized religious life of the community was placed upon a safe basis. That Warkentin's work was appreciated by the Russian Government is shown by the fact that in 1804 he was awarded a gold medal by the Emperor Alexander through the Russian consul at Danzig for his services to the young colony at a critical period of its history.

The colonists adopted such a type of settlement as best suited their needs on the vast treeless plains. Most of them grouped themselves into small villages of from thirty to fifty families. The houses were at first built on both sides of a long wide street, quite a distance back. From the first, trees of all sorts, especially fruit trees, were planted in great numbers about the houses and throughout the villages. The houses at Chortitz were built at first of mud walls, but later of wood and brick. Surrounding the village were the farms of one hundred and seventy-five acres each, and frequently common pasture land where community sheep were herded or common woodland which later was converted into farm areas as the village population grew. The principal occupation during the early years was stock-raising and especially sheep-breeding, dairying and farming. The silk industry for a time was quite important and a large number of mulberry trees were planted. Bee culture too was given some attention. Later with the advent of the railroad and good markets on the Black Sea, farming and especially wheat raising became the leading industry.

Industrial life was not strongly developed, although in 1820 at Halbstadt there was a cloth and also other manufac-

turies, and in both colonies there was considerable of hand labor manufacturing for such as did not carry on agriculture exclusively. The statistics for Chortitz in 1819, show that in a population of two thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, distributed through eighteen villages, there were two clockmakers, nine turners, two coopers, eighty-eight joiners, twenty-six carpenters, sixteen smiths, forty-nine weavers, one dyer, twenty-five tailors, twenty shoemakers, besides several millers, brewers and others. Of buildings there were in the Old Colony at the same time four hundred and seventy-six dwelling houses, two churches, twenty-two windmills, one water mill, three gristmills, two distilleries and one brewery.

Both colonies had a steady growth and in course of time converted the vast treeless steppes into flourishing fields, orchards, meadows and pastures, in which were found large herds of sheep and cattle. By 1860 the Molotschna colony had grown to fifty villages, and the Chortitz to eighteen with five more in Bergthal, a daughter colony. The total population was about thirty thousand, owning an area of about seven hundred thousand acres of land.

While the colonies were not communistic, yet the village undertook a number of municipal enterprises. Each village had a common granary for emergency and for the poor. Frequently villages held tracts of land for later distribution among a growing population. In 1820 the municipal sheep flock of the Old Colony consisted of one thousand Merinos, while the income from the common ferry was from two to three thousand rubles annually. The municipal distillery, too, that year netted a substantial income for the common treasury.

Instrumental in bringing about this economic prosperity was the Agricultural Association, founded in Ohrloff in the Molotschna in 1830 by Johann Cornies and a number of other far-sighted men. The association was given governmental sanction, and in many matters acted as a semi-official organization. The leading spirit was the above mentioned Cornies who was early made its president, a position which he held

until his death in 1848. He conducted many experiments and adopted many methods now well-known in scientific agriculture. He was known far and wide as an agricultural expert, being frequently visited by government officials, including both Alexander I. and Alexander II. Similar societies were formed in other colonies, and their activities were not confined to the Mennonite settlements but they influenced neighboring Jewish, Russian and Tartar colonies to better farming. Among the results secured through the efforts of the organization were the planting of large numbers of trees especially mulberry trees for the silk industry, the four-year rotation of crops, the breeding of improved strains of stock, and the building of model school houses and practical farm buildings. The poorer colonists were induced to enter the service of the more prosperous. Neglected children were provided for, and the organization even was influential in securing regulations compelling the lazy to do work. The administration of the schools was finally turned over to the association also. In some of the colonies this association still exists, while in others it has run its course.

In the course of a half century the land question became one of the acute problems in both colonies. By 1860 in the Molotschna out of forty-four hundred families only fourteen hundred owned entire estates or half estates, leaving over two-thirds of the families without any land whatsoever. The surplus land which in the beginning was not put into cultivation and which was the property of the entire colony was leased to the rich land-owners for sheep raising at a ridiculously low rent while such of the landless as desired to farm were often forced to go many miles out from the settlement and lease land at a high rate. Since only the landowners had a voice in the village assembly in the management of affairs the poor were almost helpless in their attempts to secure redress. And since the large estates were to serve as model estates the original one hundred and seventy-five-acre farms had not been subdivided.

This condition naturally bred a great deal of discontent and ran a dividing line through the population, often cutting through the ties of domestic and social kinship. Cornies sought to remedy the situation by introducing manufacturing industries in Halbstadt, but to no avail. The only relief available was to enter some industry other than agriculture, buy or rent land outside of the settlement, or emigrate elsewhere. The landless finally organized and appealed to the Russian Government for help. Their program demanded a division of the common land, a dividing of the large estates into smaller ones, and the purchase of the entire colony of new lands for the benefit of the landless.

The Government finally recommended that the original estates of one hundred and seventy-five acres might be subdivided; that of the surplus land, estates of thirty acres each might be created; and that the owners of the small estates might have the same right to vote as those of large estates in village assembly. These recommendations brought a measure of relief, and together with the more recent development of industry, the establishing of daughter colonies and the exodus to America saved the situation from serious consequences, but the land question was still an important one up to the recent war.

The local government of the Mennonite colonies was unique and adapted to their special needs. As we saw, the whole German population of south Russia was given a special status within the empire. Their affairs were largely in the hands of a committee(Fuersorge Komitee), representing the ministry and stationed at Odessa. The director, still more closely in touch with the local inhabitants, represented a division of the large unit of administration called Government. In all strictly local affairs the Mennonite colonies were given great freedom to govern themselves and elect their own officials. They constituted a sort of democracy within an autocracy, and enjoyed greater freedom than the native Russian communities. At the head of each of the two colonies,

Chortitz and Molotschna, presided a superintendent (Oberschulzen) elected by representatives from the different villages and a clerk (Schreiber) who kept the records and must be able to use both the German and Russian languages. Over each villege there was a sort of an over-seer or magistrate (Schulz) who carried out orders from above, presided at the village assemblies, and punished petty misdemeanors.

Here we have one of the very few instances in Mennonite history of a self-governing Mennonite community. It is needless to say that it was not always easy to carry out the Mennonite principles of non-resistance and opposition to force and at the same time maintain the discipline necessary for a stable order. To the Mennonite magistrate fell the lot of administering local discipline. Whipping was a frequent method of punishment. To lead a fellow-member to the whipping post seemed at times a little inconsistent with the injunction "Resist not evil." To the village meeting were left also such local questions as providing for schools and teachers, appointing herders, maintaining roads, caring for the poor and distributing the surplus land.

Being a religious group, the government approached that of a theocracy. The elders though not at the head of temporal affairs, yet as heads of the church exercised great influence over matters of government, especially over schools which were largely controlled by the church. At first the directors requested the elders to assist them in the administration of many local affairs. This necessitated frequent meetings of the elders. Out of this grew an institution known as the Church Council (Kirchen Konvent) in 1850, the highest church authority in the colony, which also exercised some influence in matters not strictly ecclesiastical. Laymen had no voice in these meetings. The elders thus occupied a position of unusual power in the colony. The formation in 1883 of the General Conference of the Mennonites of South Russia ended the old Church Council.

School matters were left entirely to the local communities.

Mennonites could have any kind of schools they desired, or none at all, if they so wished. This was true until 1881, when school administration was taken over by the Russian Government. From the very first, however, elementary subscription schools were established in most villages and appropriate though primitive school buildings were erected in course of time. The interest in education among the masses was not very strong. It was especially difficult to secure efficient teachers, meager as the requirements were. The first teachers were usually old men, workmen frequently, who converted their workshops into a combination school and workroom with school desk and work bench side by side and the rod and plane both within easy reach. The teacher's only task was to keep order and to hear the lessons assigned. This gave him plenty of opportunity to ply his real vocation, that of a carpenter, or shoemaker, perhaps. Progress of course was slow. Several years were usually spent in mastering the bare rudiments of reading and writing. The distinctive school furniture within the room consisted of a long table through the center, with the boys on one side, the girls on the other, and the master at the head. The two primary aims of the school system were to maintain the German language and to teach religion. The curriculum consisted of the traditional three R's with singing added. In spite of valuable service rendered the school cause by the Agricultural Association and especially its president, Johann Cornies, in the early days, the second generation of the Prussian emigrants degenerated both intellectually and spiritually in their new home, a stage through which all pioneers must necessarily pass.

There were a few farsighted men, however, and especially a few enthusiastic teachers who kept the cause of education alive. In the early twenties at Ohrloff an association was formed for the purpose of establishing a school of higher learning. To the head of this school they called as principal teacher, a Tobias Voth, who had considerable experience as a teacher in West Prussia. For six years Voth succeeded in

influencing a large number of students to enroll for work. Evening classes and reading circles were introduced. Mission study was organized. For lack of proper support, Voth was soon forced to leave Ohrloff, however. Later he established private schools at Schönsee and Steinbach. He was succeeded as an educational leader by Heinrich Hesse, a member of the progressive Gnadenfeld church, who encouraged especially the study of Russian among the German colonists. Hesse remained here until he was called to Chortitz in 1840 where he founded a "Central Schule," a sort of high school and Normal school for the training of teachers. Similar central schools were also founded in the Molotschna and other colonies. German and Russian were both taught. The course consisted of three years' work. Free tuition was offered poor students on condition, however, that they promise to serve the community after school either as teachers or village clerks, the two positions at that time requiring some little training. Russians as well as Germans frequently attended these schools.

Another well-known teacher of the time was Heinrich Franz, successor to Hesse in Chortitz and later head of the "Bruderschule" in Gnadenfeld in 1857. This school was established largely for the purpose of training missionaries, and marks a step in advance in the progress of Mennonite schools in Russia. In 1859 both the Gnadenfeld "Bruderschule" and the Ohrloff "Vereinschule" were recognized as training schools for Mennonite teachers.

It has already been suggested that the spiritual and moral standards were not high during the early years, and were not improved during the first two generations. Living conditions were such at first as are common in frontier settlements. Educational opportunities were meager. Church life was formal. Children almost automatically joined the church at a certain age, irrespective of their religious experience. In Chortitz, a drinking house was early established. Drunken brawls were not unusual, in one of which a man was killed. The colonies were closed communities and were made im-

pervious by language and religion as well as by geography to any outside influence either good or bad. Among themselves, they had neither printing press nor papers, and but few books.

These conditions were not improved by numerous quarrels and dissensions. Among the unfortunate quarrels was the Ohrloff-Barley controversy in 1858 as it was called, which began as a local quarrel between two members of the Ohrloff settlement over a rented barley field. The quarrel grew until it divided not only the Ohrloff congregation, but extended wide over the entire Molotschna settlement. At the same time, too, occurred a controversy in the Halbstadt congregation over the building of a new church. On the matter of church doctrines and discipline, too, there were numerous controversies. At the time of their immigration from Prussia they were divided into three groups, all inherited from their original homes in Holland—Flemish, Frisian, and old Flemish or Uko-Walists. There was little religious intercourse among these groups, and intermarriage was forbidden. That the Empress Catherine regarded these religious divisions detrimental to the material prosperity of the early colonies is shown by the fact that she sent van Trappe to Holland to study the reasons for these divisions and also to enlist the help of the Dutch Mennonites in bringing about agreement especially permitting intermarriage, but to no avail.

Kleine Gemeinde

To these imported divisions new ones were soon added within the colony. The first controversy arose over the question of church discipline, and especially the question as to whether Mennonites might become magistrates and use force against fellow Mennonites. The issue was raised between 1812 and 1820 by a recent Prussian minister by the name of Klaas Reimer, an ambitious, hypercritical, self-willed, though sincere man, who answered the latter question in the negative, and who favored a more rigid discipline in religious matters than was being practised at the time in the Molotschna colony. Reimer stirred up so much dissension through his preaching

that Jacob Enns, the Molotschna elder, asked the Mennonite governmental authorities to silence him, a power, no doubt, within their jurisdiction. The former appealed his case to Johann Wiebe, the Chortitz elder, who in turn threatened him with Siberia, if he insisted in creating a distinct religious organization which he was now attempting to do. This only made matters worse and soon after Reimer, together with eighteen others, seceded from the church and organized one of their own in spite of the above threats. Through the influence of Johann Cornies of the Agricultural Association they were given recognition by the Russian Government which guaranteed them all the rights originally granted the colonies as Mennonites. Other similar small groups seceded throughout the various settlements and thus was founded what became known as the "Kleine Gemeinde."

They were strict disciplinarians, practised the most rigid simplicity in their clothing, houses and furniture; would not hold office and believed it wrong to turn over a church brother to the temporal authorities to be punished; objected to the excessive hilarity at weddings and the social features of burial occasions; and condemned smoking. They declared the old church too formal and demanded a more spontaneous religious life based upon definite experience. They were decidedly seclusive and condemned all educational efforts. In 1826 feet-washing was introduced into their communion service.

According to Reimer himself some fell into excessive fanaticism in the fervor of their early religious experiences. They laid much stress upon visions and dreams. Certain of them forced themselves to undergo excessive hardships, went through long fasts, spent hours in prayer standing or lying in deep snow, from the effects of which at least one young man died. Others when praying before meals would not eat unless their emotionalism could find relief in bitter weeping. They frequently ate poor food and went hungry, thinking thereby they would please God. As is frequently the case, so here, too, their excessive emotionalism, finally led to serious immorality.

Reimer himself, however, seems to have kept his head. But his church never had much influence and it never grew large. By 1860 it had nearly run its course. In the seventies a small group planted the division in Kansas.

In the meantime other conflicting currents within the church developed into separate divisions when Elder Bernhard Fast of Halbstadt, a liberal-minded man, introduced a number of innovations (1822-1824) into his services. Three-fourths of the conservative Flemish membership over which he presided withdrew from him and reorganized their congregation. Among the innovations to which they objected were the ordination of Elder Fast by the Frisian elder at Rudnerweide, and not by the Flemish official at Chortitz as had been the custom heretofore; the admission of an Evangelical missionary to the communion table; the founding of the Ohrloff Verein school; and the organizing of a Bible society, a branch of the St. Petersburg society. Among the objections raised against this Bible society was the fact that the titles president, secretary, etc., savored of militarism. Scarcely one hundred and fifty families remained with Fast. The remainder secured a new elder, ordained at Chortitz and called themselves the "Pure Flemish" but later they became known as the Lichtenau-Petershagen group of churches, or sometimes too as the "Grosze Gemeinde." They were exceedingly conservative and opposed every forward step in their church life. The Ohrloff congregation on the other hand which followed the lead of Elder Fast became the most progressive in the colony.

Bruedergemeinde

The most far-reaching of the church controversies, however, was the one which resulted in the formation of the Brudergemeinde. The church as a whole as has already been indicated at this time was rather cold and formal so far as conscious religious experience and special religious activity was concerned. But in one congregation, at Gnadenfeld, there seemed to be the beginning of a more vital spiritual awakening. The Gnadenfeld congregation of forty families had re-

cently (1835) located by special permission of Emperor Nicholas I in the Molotschna from Brandenburg, Prussia, under the leadership of the Elder William Lange. Here were to be found a missionary society, prayer meetings, and other activities unusual in the churches of that period.

In the meantime the Mennonite churches came into contact with two outside currents of religious life which exerted some influence among them. The first was a new movement sponsored by a group of rationalistic Zionists in Wurtemburg, known as Jerusalem Friends or Templers. The literature found its way to many of the Mennonite villages and especially to Gnadenfeld. One of the teachers of the Gnadenfeld school, Johann Lange, had received his training at a Jerusalem Friend Institution. Gnadenfeld thus became a center of the new teaching. The Mennonites were bitterly condemned by the enthusiasts, and an attempt was made to establish a Temple, as their church congregations were called. A bitter controversy followed resulting in the imprisonment of Lange for six months and later in the emigration of the Templers to the Caucasus where there is still a congregation or two.

The other was a more wholesome though not a less troublesome movement, and was largely the work of an enthusiastic Evangelical preacher, known as Pastor Wuest, from an Evangelical church near Berdiansk. Pastor Wuest, a sort of a John Wesley of South Russia, traveled extensively, and being an eloquent and fiery speaker drew large crowds wherever he went among all denominations. He laid special emphasis upon the doctrine of the free grace of God, and the need of a definite religious experience in the Christian life. He often visited the mission fests at Gnadenfeld and other congregations where he secured a considerable of a following. Finally a number of his disciples from several of the Mennonite churches becoming dissatisfied with what they regarded as the formality of the church held meetings among themselves, and considering themselves too pure to participate in the communion services with the others, demanded that the

elder administer the sacrament to them as a separate group, which, of course, the elder refused to do; whereupon they celebrated the rite among themselves in a secret meeting. When these secret activities became known they naturally aroused a great deal of opposition and brought matters to a head. The new party declaring the old church to be hopelessly corrupt decided to withdraw entirely and found a new organization. On January 6, 1860, a group of eighteen men, but not a preacher among them, drew up a document in which they stated their reasons for withdrawal and which they presented to the Mennonite elders. Among these reasons were:

"The religious decay of the entire Mennonite brotherhood, and on account of the Lord's will and our conscience we can no longer fellowship with you as a church. For we fear that God's judgment is inevitable, since the prevailing Godlessness crieth unto Heaven. Besides we are fearful lest the Government repeal the special privileges granted to the Mennonites on account of their open transgressions. It is sad to behold how on market days the Mennonites carry on such a frivolous life, in which even the ministers take part."

The elders, of course, opposed the secession movement. For several years there was a bitter controversy between them and the new party over a separate organization.

The Molotschna colony was not only a group of church congregations but also an economic and civil unit with special rights and privileges granted by the Emperor. It was a self-governing body and as such could prevent seceding groups from enjoying the economic and civil privileges granted the original colony. By enforcing the church ban also, which in most of the churches excluded the excommunicated from all business and social activities of the congregation they could be isolated almost entirely from the community life. By virtue of a regulation of 1857 which gave the colony the right to prevent the organization of secret societies within the body, the elders attempted through the local Mennonite civil au-

thorities (Gebiets Amt) to prevent the seceders from organizing. The latter were threatened with Siberia and several of the leaders were imprisoned for a short time. By an appeal to the Imperial Court at St. Petersburg, however, through Johann Claasen, one of their most influential leaders, they won their case and became a separate unit. Being informed by the authorities, however, that they could not become a separate society, but might remain as a distinct division of the original Mennonite body, they now insisted in order to retain their special privileges in the Molotschna colony that they, and not the main body, were the true followers of Menno Simons, and to this end they maintained their right to membership in the fold by christening themselves "Mennoniten Bruedergemeinde" (Mennonite Brethren).

In the main the Mennonite Brethren did not depart far from Mennonite fundamentals. The characteristic doctrines were all retained. In addition they emphasized the emotional side of religion and taught the need of a definite religious experience. They soon introduced baptism by immersion, which accounts for their intimacy with the Baptists, both in Europe and America, and feetwashing, and were strict in discipline.

In common with other movements advocating a freer and more spontaneous expression of their newly found liberty, they made much of enjoying their experiences, and were quite demonstrative, giving vent to their feelings in singing, shouting, and sometimes in dancing. One case is recorded where the brethren washed the feet of the sisters, the latter also reciprocating. Some burned all their books except those advocating immersion. Others, like the Quakers in New England, even attended the meetings of the old church for the purpose of disturbing them. Such cases, of course, were rare and the spirit of fanaticism did not last long. Time soon eliminated these excesses and on the whole the movement had a beneficial effect on the old church in emphasizing the need of a deeper spiritual life and a more vital religion. Under

the leadership of such men in the old church as Lenzman from Gnadenfeld, Suderman from Berdiansk, and Harder of Ohrloff and others, progressive church activities were increasingly fostered in the main body during the last half of the nineteenth century.

The Mennonite Brethren maintained a steady and substantial growth from 1860 to the present. By 1885 seven hundred and four had been received into the church at Molotschna. The movement also spread into Chortitz and to the Crimea, where a church was organized under the leadership of Jacob Wiebe, an elder of a "Kleine Gemeinde." In 1874 and later many of the Mennonite Brethren followed the great exodus to America. The church continued to grow and later additions were secured wherever the Mennonite church was found in Kuban, Cherson, Warsaw, Samara, Turkestan and Siberia. In 1910 the membership was seven thousand with a total population of about seventeen thousand, nearly one-fifth of the whole Russian Mennonite population.

As the two original colonies grew, the original land purchases became too small to accommodate the growing population. As early as 1836 Chortitz found it necessary to add to the original land area. With the help of the Russian Government they secured a tract of land near the original, large enough to care for one hundred and fifty families. Five villages were located here in a new colony which they called Bergthal. This colony later migrated bodily to America in the seventies after selling their land to a group of German Catholics. In 1846 one of the elders in the Molotschna was forced to leave his colony for having incurred the ill will of the Mennonite "Gebiets Amt." He went to Poland whither he was followed by sixty families from his own church.

In the early sixties the Russian Government offered land on easy terms to industrious farmers in the Crimea where large numbers of Tartars had been forced to leave because they had been disloyal during the recent Crimean war.

A number of Mennonite villages were ultimately established on these vacated lands. In the early seventies also a number of the Molotschna colonists located in nearby Cherson. In 1895 the Molotschna colony bought an extensive tract along the lower Volga, which they offered on easy terms to their landless inhabitants. Recent statistics show that in addition to the two original colonies in the provinces of Ekaterinoslav and Taurien, Mennonite groups are now found throughout South Russia in the provinces of Cherson, Saratov, Samara, Ufa, Orenburg, Kuban, Crimea, as well as in Volhynia and Poland and also in Turkestan and Siberia.

Some of these daughter colonies, it will be observed, were municipal enterprises for the benefit of the new swarms that found no room in the old hive. Most of them, too, followed the custom of grouping themselves into villages, although in a few cases farm-houses were built in the open country.

In addition to these various daughter colonies, several settlements were made during the middle of the century direct from Prussia, independent of the old Chortitz and Molotschna colonies. The emigration to Volhynia and Poland in the latter part of the eighteenth century and of the Huterites to Wischenka, and the Gnadenfeld group to the Molotschna in 1835 have already been mentioned.

Especially interesting is the settlement made at Saratov by a group of Prussians in 1853 to escape military service. In 1850 the Russian Government had offered the West Prussian Mennonites the choice of several tracts of land on the lower Volga, near the southeastern frontier. A small band of Prussians accepted the offer and located on what was known as the Salt Tract, near Saratov, in the province of the same name. This colony they named Koeppenthal. In 1861 a second one was established near Samara. Settlers from the Molotschna also located here. By 1888 the Saratov members numbered six hundred and nineteen and those at Samara four hundred and eighteen.

But the great emigration from all the colonists was the exodus to America between 1874 and 1880 which was caused not so much by the population pressure, as by the change of policy on the part of the Russian Government toward its German colonists and especially with reference to the introduction of universal military service without exemptions.

As already stated the Mennonites were not the only German settlers in Russia. Under the liberal policy of Catherine and her successors, Germans of every faith had located in South Russia in large numbers. By 1870 the number perhaps was not far from two million. By special agreement with the Prussian Government at the time of the immigration they had been granted certain special rights, such as the use of their own language, their own form of local government, and military exemption. They constituted in reality a little "Germany" within Russia. Because of their industry and superior skill and special privileges they had incurred the jealousy of the native Russians, whom they in turn held in contempt. Such an anomalous situation, of course, could only be temporary. And it was not strange that in the late sixties with the growth of Prussia as a military power, Russia decided to end these special privileges of her German subjects. By 1870 a program of Russianification had been adopted. The special German organs of local government were to be abolished; Russian was to become the official language; schools, too, a few years later were placed under the control of Russian officials; from universal military service Germans were now no longer to be exempt. In other words these Germans who had retained their language, customs, culture, and to a certain extent their loyalty to their original fatherland, were now to be thoroughly Russianized. Among these Russian Germans, of course, only a small number were Mennonites, perhaps somewhere near thirty-five or forty thousand.

To the Mennonites especially alarming was the rumor that they too, would be liable to military service, thus losing

the privileges promised them in their charter by Paul I, in 1800.

It may be said here in passing, that the Mennonites had always shown themselves loyal to their Government in war and peace, and cheerfully contributed their share to the national burdens. In the Crimean War the Molotschna settlements were not far from the scene of action. Mennonite teamsters did useful service in transporting troops to the Crimea. In hospital service, especially, they did a noble work in caring for the wounded in the very war in which Florence Nightingale really inaugurated the present Red Cross work on the battlefield. The Mennonites opened their homes to the sick and wounded and cared for them at their own expense. It is said that they provided for five thousand sick and wounded. In the recent Japanese war too, they contributed toward the hospital and relief work and several of their young men died in the field service.

Realizing the seriousness of the situation in 1870, the different colonies sent three separate committees to St. Petersburg in behalf of their special privileges. They were granted interviews with the ministry and with the Crown Prince but not with the Emperor. Spokesman for one of the committees was Elder Leonhard Suderman from Berdiansk. While defending the Mennonite peace principles before the ministry, the minister of war interrupting him, inquired of him what he would do in case he were attacked by an enemy. "I would reconcile myself with the enemy," replied Suderman, "would approach him, embrace him but not kill him," an answer which, it is said, greatly amused the war minister.

These interviews evidently were not satisfactory and it seemed that emigration would be the only recourse. A final written appeal in behalf of their former privileges was sent to the emperor with little hope of success, however, for at the same time preparations were being made to seek a new home. But where were they to go? Africa and Siberia were both

seriously considered, but America was finally decided upon as furnishing the best asylum. But of this country many strange notions were held. In the words of the Suderman above mentioned, to many, America was a country "interesting for the adventurer and an asylum for convicts. How could one think of finding a home in peace and under his vine and fig tree among such and other-like people in addition to the wild natives (Indians)."

The appeal to the Emperor, however, bore some fruit. Through the efforts of Adjutant General von Todtleben, a famous general of the Crimean War, and the reluctance of the Emperor to lose thousands of his most industrious subjects, a modification of the original order in behalf of the Mennonites was secured. Instead of military service they were to be permitted to substitute service in hospitals, government factories, railroads, and especially in the national forestries, none of which industries were carried on under the military arm of the government. Count von Todtleben was sent among the Mennonite settlements to induce them to accept the service and not emigrate to America. By this time, however, the emigration fever had already become quite general. Although many were turned from their original purpose, yet about one-third of the whole Mennonite population objected to any sort of service that was in any way connected with militarism, and these finally nearly all found their way to America. The government set the year 1880 as the date for the beginning of the forestry service and up to that time, Mennonites were free to emigrate with all their possessions without the payment of a special emigration tax.

The Russian Government did not encourage the emigration, however. Several men who had played a leading role in the emigration propaganda were ordered to leave the country on short notice. Among these was Cornelius Jansen, prominent resident, though not a Russian citizen of Berdiansk, who had formerly acted as Prussian consul at that port. One day in April, 1873, Jansen was given seven days in which to

dispose of his property and leave Russia never to return. The time was finally extended to sixty days, however, through the intervention of Bismarck, who still had great influence at St. Petersburg and with whom Jansen had become acquainted while consul. Jansen came to America the same year, where together with his son, Peter, he played an important part in locating his fellow-countrymen upon the western prairies during the years immediately following.

In the meantime a delegation of twelve men was sent to America in 1873 to investigate various sites in Western Canada and United States suitable for future homes. This committee reporting favorably upon its return, preparations were made for a large exodus the following year. Among the leaders during the next few years were Elder Leonhard Suderman of Berdiansk, already mentioned, Elder Isaac Peters of Pordenau, Elder Jacob Buller, Minister Heinrich Richert, Elder Jacob Wiebe of the Crimean "Kleine Gemeinde," Johann Wiebe of Chortitz, Gerhard Wiebe of the Bergthal colony, and Abraham Schellenburg of the Brudergemeinde who did not arrive until 1879.

As already seen the decision to emigrate was not unanimous. The majority decided to remain in Russia, maintaining that under the circumstances the Russian Government had been quite liberal toward Mennonite scruples. Among these were many prominent men, who accused the leaders of the emigration movement of being actuated sometimes by other than purely religious motives in their desire to leave Russia. The loss of their special status as Germans, it was charged, had as much influence with these as did the loss of their religious status. Undoubtedly there was a grain of truth in this charge. The Mennonites clung tenaciously to their German inheritance. Of the committeemen sent to St. Petersburg in 1871 only two could speak Russian. The remainder were censured at the time by the Government officials for inability to speak the language of their native land, three-quarters of a century after the founding of the first settlement. Even in

America one sometimes hears the expression among Mennonites that Mennonitism is closely tied up with "Deutschtum." A recent well-known historian of the church suggests that Mennonitism would lose much of its essential character with the loss of the German language. In addition to both the motives just expressed there was the further economic consideration. While there were a few wealthy men among the emigrants who sold their Russian holdings at a great sacrifice and a number of well-to-do, the large majority were poor men and had to be given financial aid in their early American homes.

From 1874 to 1880 there was a continual stream of emigrants leaving from all the colonies, and the various wings of the church. The Bergthal colony of five villages left as a body, as did also the two Huterite villages. The Alexanderwohl congregation transplanted itself bodily to Kansas where it resumed its life under the same name. Every colony in South Russia made its contribution to the general movement. In all, somewhere between twelve and fifteen thousand left Russian soil for Western America.

Not all of those who objected to forestry service left for America. One small group in the Saratov colony and another in the Molotschna turned their faces eastward. The Koeppenthal congregation in Saratov had come here as already indicated from West Prussia in the fifties. Even in their old home a number of these colonists had come under the influence of certain chiliastic ideas. Chiliastic literature followed them to their new home. One of their own members, too, Claas Epp Junior, son of the first leader of the same name, wrote a book explaining the prophecies of Daniel and the mysteries of Revelation, of which he had three editions issued at his own expense and which he distributed widely. According to this interpretation Christ would appear in 1889, and somewhere in Middle Asia was to be found the gathering place for the faithful. The church in "Philadelphia" mentioned in Revelation to which the open door was to be revealed, of course,

meant his own little flock. As 1880, the close of the exemption period, drew near, preparations were made not only in the Salt Tract in Saratov, but also in the congregation of Elder Abraham Peters in the Molotschna, who held views similar to those of Epp, for the most visionary adventure in all Mennonite history—an exodus to a wild, unknown barren land in the heart of a Mohammedan population to meet the Lord and inaugurate the Millenium. In the meantime at St. Petersburg a special committee had secured from Governor General Kauffman of Turkestan permission to locate near Tashkend, and a promise of military exemption. Epp's followers accordingly sold their property and started out on their adventure.

The first party of ten families, seventeen wagons and forty horses started out July, 3, 1880 headed toward the east, accompanied for a short distance by relatives, prospective fellow-wanderers, and friends and singing the well known old hymn as a fitting pilgrim song,

"Our journey is through the Wilderness
To the promised Canaan."

For fifteen long weeks they continued to drag their weary way toward the southeast over the mountain passes, across uninhabited steppes, a vast stretch of desert, enduring all sorts of hardships until they finally reached Kaplan Bek, some fifteen miles from Tashkend, where they prepared to camp for the winter. Twelve children had died on the way. Temporary shelter was put up where many died from typhoid fever, in the course of a short time.

The same fall another train of thirteen families from the Salt Tract, and one of fifty-six families from the Molotschna under Elder Abraham Peters, had started out. Both groups reached their destination the same fall. The latter remained in Tashkend for the winter. The next spring the two groups parted, a quarrel having arisen over the question of church organization. Elder Peters' group, with a few from the Sara-

tov party, finally located at Aulia Ata on the Talas river at the foot of the Alexander mountains about one hundred and fifty miles from Tashkend. Here Elder Peters soon died and the remainder of the colonists forgetting their millenarian delusions built up a rather prosperous settlement. The colony now consists of five villages with a population of nearly one thousand. Military exemption, however, was not granted them. They accepted the same kind of forestry service they might have had in Russia. A little later about one-half of this colony formed a Bruedergemeinde.

In the meantime, in the winter of 1881, the last group of twenty-five families from Saratov under the leadership of Epp himself had arrived. He immediately took charge of the three Saratov contingents, and the breach with the Peters' party became more marked than ever. The followers of Epp now sought in vain for a location near Tashkend and Bokhara where they might escape military service. They were driven from one place to another until they were finally offered an asylum by the Khan of Khiva, who desired German settlers within his territory. Epp regarding this as the open door spoken of in Revelations accepted the invitation, locating on the Lausan, a tributary of the Amu. The open door, however, only proved to be one to further trouble. Their mud houses with thatched roofs were not rain proof, and many died of malaria. Worst of all, bands of thieving Turks began to steal their horses. Finding the non-resisting settlers an easy prey, they soon became bolder and made nightly raids, breaking into houses, stealing whatever they could find and even attempting to carry away the most attractive women. In one of these raids one of the settlers was murdered. The young men finally asked permission to defend themselves with weapons, but the only means of defence granted by the leaders was permission to remain up all night armed with clubs and canes. These weapons, however, proved no match for the swords of the Turks and the settlers were finally forced to strain their extreme non-resistant principles to the extent of asking pro-

tection from the Khan. The latter sent them a group of soldiers but as soon as these were withdrawn depredations were renewed. They were finally offered a refuge near the city of Khiva, at Ak Metchedj, where they still live.

In the meantime, Epp went from bad to worse in his extravagant views. He was largely guided by dreams and visions. For every mystery in Revelation he had an interpretation. He himself was to be one of the two witnesses of the coming Millennium. A fellow-minister with whom he had a quarrel and whom he excommunicated was the Red Dragon, whose expulsion was celebrated for many years by the congregation. Other similar holidays were added while less and less was made of the old holy days. Soon Epp was to meet Elijah in the skies and with him be transported bodily to Heaven. The time was actually announced and an audience of both the faithful and doubtful gathered to bid him farewell. A table was prepared, behind which stood Epp clad in his ascension robes ready to depart. It is said by those present that he actually disappeared from behind the table, but no one witnessed his ascension.

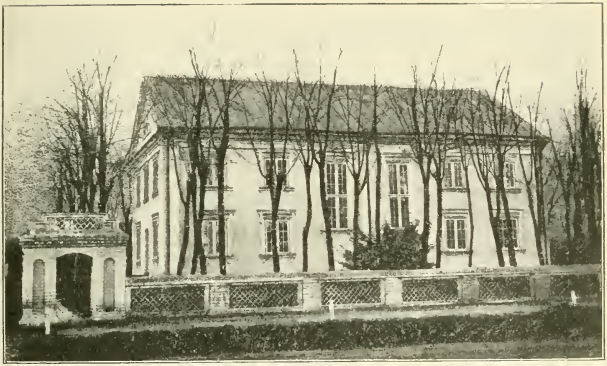
Finally the great day for Christ's appearance on Earth was set for March 8, 1889. As the time passed without any unusual occurrence, Epp was ready with an explanation for the failure of his prophecy. He had been given the clue by an old wall-clock, whose hands pointed to 89 on the dial. But now in a vision he had been shown that the clock had indicated the wrong numbers because it had been leaning slightly to one side. Upon being stood erect it indicated 91. That was now to mark the end—the year 1891. The climax came when Epp finally claimed to be a son of Christ as Christ was the Son of God, thus constituting the fourth person of the Godhead. In baptism he used the formula Father, Sons, and Holy Ghost.

As a result of these extravagances and blasphemies Epp's flock continually dwindled smaller. Many had been cured early of their foolish beliefs, and in the early eighties had

come to America. Some returned to Russia; others joined the Aulia Ata colony; a handful, however, as misguided as Epp himself remained loyal to him awhile longer, but even these finally found his extravagances unbearable, and were forced to excommunicate him. He died in 1913. At that time the settlement consisted of about twenty families located on about fifteen acres of land, most of whom were earning their bread by some sort of day labor.

This episode, the strangest in Mennonite annals, is not without a moral. Mennonites have been rather susceptible to such unwholesome influences. Several times undue stress upon chiliastic and apocalyptic views has led to unfortunate results. Even at the present time perhaps there is more teaching of this sort than is wholesome which, in times of stress might easily lead to undesirable results.

A much more important migration of an entirely different character was that into western Siberia during the early years of the twentieth century, in the general region of Omsk in the provinces of Tomsk, and Akmolinsk on both sides of the Siberian Railway. The first group of settlers came from the Molotschna and Samara locating near Omsk in Akmolinsk in 1889. By 1913 the colony had grown to about five thousand inhabitants. In 1897 a colony had also located in Tomsk at Baulodar, where by 1913 there were twelve villages, and in 1909 a much larger settlement was founded at Barnaul, one hundred and seventy-five miles south of the Siberian Railroad where there are now forty-five villages and a population of some eleven thousand. These latter were principally of the poorer classes in the old colonies, coming from the landless group. At the time of the migration, each family was given four hundred rubles by the home-colony. In the first years they endured many hardships, being far from the railroad and without marketing facilities. A branch railroad has now been built to their colony. In recent years, however, several successive drouths and now the war, have greatly impoverished many of the settlers.



Mennonite Church at Ohrloff, Russia.

Girls School, Halbstadt, Russia.

The forestry service in Russia for the Mennonite young men was inaugurated in 1880. Most of the men took this service in preference to other forms of state work open to them. The law provided that they work in groups and live in barracks by themselves. These barracks were provided by the church and a minister was in charge, looking after their spiritual needs. Before the war there were eight of these forestry barracks in which about one thousand young men were serving. The service, at first four years was later reduced to three. During the recent war the Mennonites were able to maintain their non-combatant standing.

The program of Russianification inaugurated between 1870 and 1880 included also the partial control of the school system. The schools remained largely church schools, however. As such the Mennonite authorities remained in charge of all religious instruction and of all German branches, while the Russian Government school officials took over the supervision of all other subjects. In addition to the village schools there are ten advanced schools similar to our high schools called Central schools. Several of these, including those at Halbstadt, Chortitz, and Omsk, give additional pedagogical courses for the training of teachers. The Central schools are not co-educational, and consequently a number of girls' schools are provided for.

The statistics for 1910 show that of village schools, including those on large estates, there are about four hundred throughout all the various Mennonite settlements. The teachers, almost exclusively men, number about five hundred. Salaries in the villages average about $300, with a teacherage. The highest salaries paid in a Central school are $800. The Ohrloff Central school has adopted a pension system. During the above year there were about 15,000 Mennonite children in the schools. There were about two hundred young men and women in the Russian institutions of higher learning, and fifty in foreign universities and schools.

Many of the ministers come from the teaching ranks and thus are equipped with some pedagogical training. There were in 1910 about five hundred ministers all told of whom forty-seven were elders. About one-third of these ministers have received either pedagogical or theological training. With the exception of travelling and visiting ministers the preachers receive no stipulated salary, although many receive some support.

During the last forty years there has been a growing interest in missions. In 1881 the pioneer missionary, Henry Dirks, returning from Sumatra, became elder of the Gnadenfeld church and also travelling secretary for the mission work, in which capacity he greatly increased missionary interest. The work in Russia is carried on through the Dutch society in which the Russian church is represented by a Board member. In 1910 there were ten active Russian missionaries in Sumatra and Java, while four had returned to the homeland. The Bruedergemeinde works with the Baptist society. In the same year they were represented by seven missionaries on the field.

Since 1883 the various (Altkirchliche) Russian Mennonite congregations are bound together by a General Conference which took the place of the old Church council organized in 1850. This conference meets annually. The session of 1910 devoted much of its time to hearing reports from various church institutions, but also passed several interesting resolutions. One of these recommended that dramatic performances in the literary clubs in the schools be discouraged, especially in the Christmas exercises; another advised the elder not to marry cousins. Several ministers were appointed to visit the Siberian churches and distribute among them such financial aid as the church desired to send them. The conference also supervises a number of charitable institutions. Among these are a number of hospitals, several orphanages and old people's homes, a deaf and dumb school, and a sanitarium.

The literary output of the Russian Mennonites has not

been extensive. The first book published in Russia was the ninth edition of the old Prussian song book published at Odessa in 1844. Outside of school-books, Confessions of Faith, catechisms and song books, not much has been written or published since. Being Germans they imported German editions of Menno Simons, van Bracht and Deitrich Philip, a few controversial pamphlets which together with such additional allegories as "Die Wandelnde Seele", furnished the sole source next to the Bible of mental and spiritual food. A number of historical works have appeared, however, during the past forty years by far the most comprehensive of which is the recent work by P. M. Friesen.

"Der Botschafter" published at Ekaterinoslav is the official church organ. The Bruedergemeinde published the "Friedenstimme" at Halbstadt, but the name was changed since the war. Several Year Books also appear annually.

The German Mennonites of Russia on the whole have been successful and prosperous in their material life, greatly exceeding in wealth and achievement that of the native Russians. In 1908 the total Mennonite wealth was 250,000,000 rubles ($125,000,000), a per capita wealth of $625 for every man, woman and child, the average throughout Russia being only $200. The Mennonites owned before the war about 2,500,000 acres of land, an average per capita of twenty-seven acres. P. M. Friesen, from whose valuable history these statistics are taken, estimates that the entire Mennonite population counts up between 85,000 and 100,000, of whom a little less than one-half among the "alt Kirchlichen Mennoniten" (Mennonites not of the Bruedergemeinde) are actual baptized members. The ratio is about four to five. Of the entire Mennonite population about 17,000 are of the Bruedergemeinde, about 7,000 of whom are baptized members. The ratio of baptized to unbaptized among these is about as two to five. "Kroeker's Familien Kalender" gives the following statistics for all Mennonites for 1911: Taurida, 75 villages, 33,500 souls; Ekaterinoslav, 72 villages, 21,440 souls; Kherson, 16 villages,

5,600 souls; Samara, 35 villages, 12,000 souls; Orenburg, 20 villages, 8,000 souls; Stravapol (Kuban) 2 villages, 2200 souls; Terek, 12 villages, 3,000 souls; with scattered settlements in Warsaw, Volhynia, Saratov and Ufa. In Siberia also there are two large settlements of about 10,000 souls in 50 villages.

During the recent war the Russian Mennonites were able to maintain the privileges granted them in 1873, that of non-combatant service. It is estimated that in all some eleven thousand served in some capacity during the three years of war. About three thousand had volunteered in the hospital and other sanitary departments. These received government support for themselves and their families. The remainder, however, in various kinds of non-combatant service had to be supported by the church at large, which proved to be rather a heavy burden.

Being Germans, the Mennonites together with other Germans, were early placed under special restrictions by the Russian Government. Their German schools were closed. The German language was prohibited in worship. Their German church papers "Der Botschafter," and the "Friedenstimme" were forced to suspend. A number of individuals were sent into Siberian exile for alleged disloyal utterances. Others were cast into prison, but frequently promised their freedom upon the payment of large sums of money. Great was the gloom among the Mennonites as to their future, and before 1917 there was a prevailing sentiment among them for migration to America after the war.

Then came the Revolution of 1917 which dethroned the Czar and established the republic, freeing all people and giving them equal rights. Gloom was turned to great rejoicing for a brief period. Although the Mennonites had been loyal to the Czar and his government throughout the early years of the war, they were also sympathetic to the new republic when it was established and from which they together with all others expected a new reign of universal

freedom. The beginning augured well. The restrictions on the use of German were removed. Their schools and churches were again opened, and their papers again published, but the "Friedenstimme" under a new name, the "Volksfreund." The exiles were permitted to return. These privileges especially so far as the use of the German was concerned were guaranteed by the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The war for them was over.

But the rejoicing was premature. Hardly had the new republic been inaugurated when it collapsed and was succeeded by the government of the Bolsheviki, which introduced a period of anarchy, bringing with it burdens for the middle class and especially the non-resistant Mennonites in many respects, greater than those of the war itself. During the past three years the channels of communication with Russia have been pretty effectually closed, but from occasional letters to friends in America, and accounts of conditions appearing in the Swiss and German Mennonite papers we learn in a general way of the Mennonite situation. Now that the war is over we will know more about the actual conditions. Most of the Mennonites in Russia live in the Ukraine but their experiences were similar in the various divisions of old Russia wherever Bolshevism was in control. The program of the Bolsheviki included the nationalization of all land and the equalization of property. This program was carried out, reducing many of the wealthy Mennonites as well as other landowners to beggars.

According to letters from Russia appearing in such papers as the Rundschau, Bundesbote, Zionsbote, Wahrheitsfreund, and Herold and other papers circulating among the American Russian churches we learn that in the Ukraine the land was to be sold by January, 1917, at a nominal price, and paid for in twenty-five year bonds bearing interest at the rate of four and one-half per cent. Bolsheviki committees consisting often of the hired men of former owners appraised the

value of the machinery, equipment and products on the estates with a view to distribution, and remained on the grounds as guards to prevent the sale of movable property. Each colony was assessed a certain sum of money which it was to pay into the treasury of the new Bolsheviki government. The sum for the Molotschna colony was 5,000,000 rubles; Chortitz was to pay 2,000,000 rubles, and seventeen prominent men were taken away as hostages who were threatened with death if the contribution was not made up.

Worst of all was the collapse of government everywhere and the class war which followed throughout all Russia. Marauding bands of cut-throats took advantage of the situation and roved about the country at will, stealing, plundering, destroying and killing as they pleased. The wealthy, non-resistant Mennonite communities seemed to be special marks for these lawless bands, although, of course, the same conditions prevailed throughout the greater part of the former empire. The large estates in the open country were the first to fall victims to the marauders. Early in 1917 many of the farmers were forced to seek refuge in the towns after their farms had been plundered and their buildings often destroyed. Many of the small villages were completely ruined—among them Steinbach and others in the Molotschna colony. At Halbstadt a small band of ruffians heavily armed and assisted by some sailors from the Azov, plundered the community at will, took a number of prisoners, and shot down in cold blood six of the leading Mennonites. The Mennonite villages were made to suffer more heavily perhaps because they were known to be non-resistant. The bands of plunderers were not always large and in non-Mennonite communities where there were no conscientious scruples against self-defense by force of arms, well-organized local militia often were able to prevent the most serious of similar disturbances. An Evangelical village near the Molotschna community, having no scruples against the bearing of arms, armed its citizens, proclaimed themselves Bolsheviki also, and threatened to shoot any Bol-

sheviki from elsewhere who dared touch their property. Their rights were undoubtedly respected.*

The community which seems to have suffered most was the colony in the province of Terek, in the Caucusas. According to a letter appearing in the Bundesbote of October 31, 1918, this colony consisting of fourteen Mennonite villages, was continuously harassed by their Mohammedan neighbors who took advantage of the anarchy of the times and the non-resistant spirit of the Mennonites. The latter after suffering many hardships and the loss of several persons at the hands of the Mohammedans were forced to decide between taking up arms in self-defense or abandoning all their possessions to their enemies. At a meeting of the leaders held February 8, 1918, it was decided not to organize a local militia, but rather to abandon all their possessions valued at millions of dollars, and seek refuge among their brethren in the interior. This decision was carried out and at the time the above letter was written most of them were still among the Mennonites in Kuban, others in Taurien and Ekaterinoslav. If these conditions were to continue for any length of time among the Mennonites, of course, there would be another exodus to a more secure land. Many have already been looking toward other countries with a view to leaving Russia. But as this is written the peace terms of the great war are being arranged and undoubtedly out of it will also come peace and established order for distracted Russia.

*Since the above was written it seems that the Mennonites were forced in some parts of Russia to give up their non-resistant principles and resort to arms for self-protection. For a brief description of conditions in the Mennonite settlements in the winter of 1919, see a letter dated January 29, 1919, from Halbstadt, written to Peter Jansen of Beatrice, Nebraska, and printed in The Mennonite of October 2, 1919.

CHAPTER VIII

FRANCE, ALSACE AND LORRAINE

The three political divisions named in the title are grouped together here because they really form one settlement historically and geographically, and until 1870 were much of the time under the same political jurisdiction. We have already seen that early in the history of the Anabaptist movement, Strasburg became a rallying point for the brethren. Here such men as Denck, Hetzer, Sattler, Marbeck and Hoffman labored. Here also were held later a number of important conferences. Small settlements were found early in the Jura and Vosges mountains and the surrounding country in France, Alsace and Lorraine. These original settlements, however, in course of time, were all practically exterminated. The present congregations are almost entirely the result of Swiss immigration from 1650 to 1750, and are for the most part of the Amish branch of the church. The following list of ministers taken from a recent Year-book shows that even in present France they are of Swiss and German, and not of French ancestry. The list includes such names as Schmutz, Roth, Lugbill, Joder, Widmer, Amstutz, Graber, Klopfenstein, Goldschmidt, Kennel, Hirschy, Bachman, Esch, Schmouker, Sommer, Gingerich, Springer, Lidwiller and Mosiman. In Alsace and Lorraine appear the additional names of Ropp, Peterschmidt, Grieser, Augsburger, Wagler, Wenger, Neuhusser, Guth, Jordy, Pelsy, Schantz, Nafziger and Schertz.

The Mennonite population of Alsace and Lorraine in 1914 was approximately twenty-three hundred souls, grouped under eleven scattered congregations extending along a line

Mennonite Church, Belfort, France.

of small communities through the middle of the provinces from Altkirch in the south, through Colmar, Dieuze, to near Metz on the north. In France there is a population of about twelve hundred, scattered through eleven congregations near the Alsatian border, in the departments of Doubs, Haut, Saone, Vosges, Haut Marne, Meuse and Meurthe et Moselle.

Alsace and Lorraine were under various political jurisdictions until the reign of Louis XIV, when both were added to France under whose control they remained until the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. As already seen, during the Swiss persecutions of the seventeenth century these regions offered an asylum for Mennonites. Louis XIV, however, attempted to persecute them, and issued a decree in 1672 banishing them. But an investigation of the teaching of the Mennonites of the Netherlands by a French theologian who had influence with the king resulted in staying the persecution. The fact that they lived quiet and simple lives in the secluded valleys of the Vosges mountains undoubtedly also contributed to their security. In 1712 when the Swiss were coming into Alsace the king again ordered them out. Some obeyed the order and settled in the Duchy of Zweibrucken, but others remained being protected by the petty noblemen on whose estates they had proved themselves industrious and profitable tenants. After 1728 during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, Mennonites were legally permitted to remain, but not to expand their settlements. This order was secured by noblemen who desired to retain the Mennonites as tenants on their estates.

As in other countries Mennonites found it difficult here also to escape universal military service. During the French Revolution in 1793, they petitioned the National Convention for release from the general levies which were then being made in the wars against Prussia and Austria. The Committee of Public Safety composed at that time of Robespierre and four others issued an order in which they commended the Mennonites for their simple virtues and recommended to the

local authorities that they treat them considerately and permit them to enter non-combatant service, or even to substitute for personal service an extra tax. This limited exemption was retained for a while, and when it was no longer renewed Mennonites took advantage of the right to secure substitutes when they were conscripted. In the conscription laws for universal military service passed since the Franco-Prussian war no special privileges were granted the Mennonites. A number have emigrated to America during the last hundred years. The rest have taken service and in the recent war have fought against their brethren across the arbitrary dividing line which separated the French from the Alsatian churches.

After the Napoleonic wars, from 1820 to 1850, a number of families from all these regions emigrated to America. The large Amish settlement in central Illinois, and those in Butler and Fulton counties, Ohio, New York and Canada are largely made up of Alsatians and Lotharingians with some from present France and South Germany.

The following description of the Amish taken from a French religious journal in 1819 at the time of the emigration to America describes the ideas and customs which they brought with them to the new world.

"The entire number of souls may be twelve or fifteen hundred scattered about through German Lotharingia, Elsasz and the neighboring Departments. Their principal settlement is at Salm, near the Vosges which they occupy almost exclusively. I do not believe that there is a single family living in any of the towns. They are small farmers being found especially as tenants on the estates of noblemen. Through their industry, intelligence and experience as farmers they have become expert in all branches of agricultural industry. This circumstance as well as their reliability and punctuality in meeting all their financial obligations have made them much sought after by noblemen as farmers on their estates."

"They consented with reluctance to carry the tricolor

cockade when that was made a duty. When they greet one they take off their hats, but like the Quakers they do not take an oath nor bear arms. When the National Convention attempted to compel them to perform military duty they refused and suggested that they be permitted to do work in the Quartermaster department instead, which was granted them by the Committee of Public Safety. Some of them served in this capacity rather than hire substitutes. To their credit be it said that unlike many others they pay their debts not in worthless assignats, but in good coin. They do not use tobacco nor play cards. To music and art they are strangers. They do not go to law. They take care of their poor and come to the rescue of their members who have financial reverses for which they were not personally responsible. On the whole they are rather illiterate, but honest, temperate, industrious and of good moral character."

Since the above was written the Mennonites, or Amish rather, of these regions have not changed a great deal. They are still a rural people although some are entering industrial and business life in the towns, and as they do so they are draining the home communities of prospective leadership. Members of congregations are often scattered over a wide territory often as much as sixty or seventy miles apart. In many places meetings are frequently held as in Switzerland in private houses, where worshippers are invited to remain for dinner before beginning their long tramp home. Meetings occur only every two or three and sometimes four weeks apart. Preachers are untrained, unsalaried and are elected by lot, and are of the usual three grades, bishops, ministers, and deacons. All the congregations with one or two exceptions practise feet-washing with the communion service. Marriage with outsiders is forbidden and punishable by excommunication. They have no training schools, but their ministers occasionally attend the missionary training school at St. Crishona, near Basel, which has also been utilized to some extent by the Mennonites of South Germany and Russia. Until recently

the Ausbund was still the accepted song-book, but it has since been replaced by more up-to-date hymnals. The Alsatian, Lotharingian and French congregations meet annually in two separate conferences. The French have also a separate paper since 1901, called the "Christseul." Up to the war of 1870 and a number of years after, the German language was in common use in service and instruction on the French side of the border, but gradually the French has entirely replaced the German which has also cut them off from their old literature and hymn books, and which has had a tendency to widen the gap which the political events of 1870 and also this recent war has made within the ranks of what was once one people with a common history and ancestry.

A number of the Alsatian and Lotharingian settlements were well within the battle zone of the western front. The church at Saar suffered heavily at the beginning of the war. The church building itself was demolished and among the members whose farms were seriously damaged was that of Minister Valentine Pelsy. Fortunately for these congregations the war ended before the battle zone in the Lorraine sector had advanced very far toward the Rhine. The coming peace convention will undoubtedly restore Alsace-Lorraine to France. That will unite these various churches once more under one national jurisdiction, and will demand certain adjustments to the new order of things.

There is also a small congregation in Luxemburg. The Year Book of 1913 gives a congregation of one hundred and twenty and the name of Nicholas Nafziger from Liessem, near Treves as the elder.

AMERICA

CHAPTER IX

FIRST SETTLEMENTS

The first Mennonites to come to America were stray Dutch traders and colonists, who accompanied their fellow countrymen from Holland to their possessions in the new world in the early days when New York was still New Netherlands. The term Anabaptist, undoubtedly Mennonite, is frequently found in the early colonial records of New Netherlands. The term Mennonite itself is found first in a report of the religious conditions in the first Dutch settlement made in the new world found in the writings of a French Jesuit traveler, Father Jogues. In a letter dated 1643, describing the "Manhate" settlement he enumerates among the religious groups—"Calvinists, Catholics, English Puritans, Lutherans and Anabaptists here called Menists." In a later document "Menonists" are reported at Gravesend, Long Island, in 1657. Beyond these bare items, however, nothing is known concerning these first comers of the Mennonite faith.

A few years later, in 1663, we glean a few more scraps of information regarding a third Dutch Mennonite colony led by the social reformer Cornelis Pieter Plockhoy or Zeirik Zee. Plockhoy was a liberal minded Dutch communist of Mennonite ancestry, who after several vain attempts to interest Cromwell and the English Parliament in behalf of a communistic commonwealth composed of the poor to be established somewhere in England or Ireland, finally succeeded in securing financial aid from the city of Amsterdam with permission to establish a colony of twenty-five Mennonite families on lands recently purchased by the city along the Delaware bay, at that time a part of New Netherlands.

According to a pamphlet written by Plockhoy in 1662, his

proposed colony was to be an experiment in cooperation, but only partly a communistic one. Provisions were made for a large colony. All the future settlers were to live in common houses accommodating from thirty to forty people, but property was not to be held in common except for the first three years during which time everyone was to work for the common good and live from a common store house. Education was to be free to all, while religious toleration was assured. There was to be no state church, nor taxation for the support of a religious institution. Denominationalism was discouraged and there was to be but one house of worship. To insure freedom from sectarian disputes no clergyman was to be permitted to locate in the colony. Among others who were denied admittance were, "Those in communion with the Roman see; usurious Jews; English stiffnecked Quakers; Puritans, foolhardy believers in the Millennium; and obstinate modern pretenders to revelation." Slavery was prohibited, and those having conscientious scruples against bearing arms were to pay a special tax for the support of those who entered military service.

How much of this scheme was actually put into practise we do not know. Our information regarding the history of the colony is scant. We do know, however, that the good ship St. Jacob sailed from Rotterdam in May 1663, and landed a few months later on the Horekill near where it empties into the Delaware, leaving there forty-one souls with baggage and farm utensils. We know also that two years later during the Dutch-English war an English expedition sailed up the Delaware, plundering all the Dutch settlements, "also that belonging to the Quaking society of Plockhoy," which was laid waste "to a very nail." The colonists were seized and dispersed, but what became of them remains a mystery. One further bit of information exhausts all that has thus far been brought to light regarding this Mennonite experiment. Thirty years later, in 1694, Plockhoy, now blind and penniless, together with his wife found his way to Germantown, where he was cared for at public expense by those of his own faith who had succeeded better than he in securing a foothold in the new world.

The first permanent Mennonite colony in America was that established at Germantown, Pennsylvania, in 1683, by a group of Germans of Dutch ancestry from the town of Crefeld, and surrounding region along the lower Rhine near the Dutch border. This colony owed its existence to two forces—religious intolerance, and Quaker missionary zeal.

Mennonites at the close of the seventeenth century had not yet secured entire religious liberty. The day of the stake and the rack, to be sure, were past, but even in Crefeld, which was one of the most liberal of German cities toward religious dissenters, they were still compelled to erect their house of worship in a back alley in order that they might not attract public attention. Active propaganda was forbidden. Special taxes were levied against them. Frequently they were subjected to extortion at the hands of petty, but greedy lords upon whose estates they lived. The Quakers especially, of whom there were now several congregations in the cities along the lower Rhine, were abused because of their aggressive efforts in extending their faith.

Between 1655 and 1680 a number of Quakers from England including both Fox and Penn had visited Northwest Germany and Netherlands repeatedly in the interests of their cause. These were especially well received by the Mennonites among whom they gained a number of Quaker converts in Crefeld, Kriesheim and other towns. It was to these Mennonite-Quakers and their Mennonite friends and relatives that Penn first made his appeal for German immigrants to his newly inherited colony of Pennsylvania. In 1682, Jacob Telner, a Mennonite merchant from Amsterdam, who had visited New York several times and who was acquainted with the London Quakers, together with five other Mennonites from Crefeld and surrounding towns purchased 18,000 acres of land in Pennsylvania for the purpose of founding a colony. About the same time too a group of Pietists from Frankfort on the Main, under the leadership of Francis Daniel Pastorious, established the Frankfort Land Company which purchased 40,000 acres north and west of Philadelphia. It was from these two groups that actual settlers purchased most of their land.

Soon after, on October 6, 1683, a group of thirteen families, Mennonites and Mennonite-Quakers, from Crefeld and the surrounding region, all with Dutch names, some well known in early Mennonite history, arrived at Philadelphia on board the ship Concord. They immediately preceded north several miles to a place selected for them by Pastorious, who had preceded them by several months, and founded Germantown, not only the first permanent Mennonite, but the first German colony in America.

Francis Daniel Pastorious, the Pietist, not a Mennonite, the agent of the Frankfort Land Company, became the John Smith of the new colony. Well educated in law and the classics, held in high esteem by William Penn, aggressive and industrious, he was well fitted to be the leader of the new enterprise. When Germantown became a corporation in 1691, he was elected the first chief magistrate, and often served the corporation as clerk. His later years were devoted to teaching in the Germantown Academy. Until his death in 1719, he remained the leading spirit of the settlement.

These first Mennonite and Quaker colonists were mostly mechanics and linen weavers, unlike later Mennonites who came to America "not given much to agriculture." They founded a village, cultivated the soil on a small scale at first, but soon turned to weaving as the chief industry. Although they passed through a brief period of hardships, they were free from Indian dangers and disease epidemics, fatal to so many colonial experiments. Soon other settlers followed these first thirteen families, many of whom located on the lands about the village. By 1700 the following family names including the first comers appear in the early records—Op den Graf, Lensen, Streypers, Lucken, van Bebber, Jansen, Schumacher, Kessel, Keyser, Rittinghuysen, Kunders, Tyson, Siemens, Keurlis, Bleikers, Tunes, Gotschalk, van Sinteren, Neus, Engel, Schlegel, Graff, etc.

Mennonite immigrants to Germantown were not numerous. In all there were perhaps not more than fifty families. Later many more of course located farther west at Skippack and Pequea. After 1700, however, Germantown became the nucleus of a large settlement of non-Mennonites. Especially attractive

was the colony for numerous German sects and religious denominations. In Germantown were organized not only the first Mennonite, and the first and perhaps only German Quaker congregation in America, but also the first Dunkard, the first German Reformed, German Lutheran, Moravian, and German Methodist churches, to say nothing of a number of sects never heard of before this side of the Atlantic.

By 1702 the available land about Germantown had all been taken up, which necessitated the establishing of a second Mennonite colony along the Skippack creek, a tributary of the Perkiomen, about thirty miles above Germantown.

Mennonites and Quakers first met for common worship, but as new immigrants came and as they represented different denominations, the religious groups began to separate for worship. By 1690, the Mennonites, although they were without a minister, met in a private house for religious instruction consisting of reading by one of their number from a book of sermons. William Rittenhouse who arrived in 1688 was soon after, in 1690, elected as their first minister. A little later, in 1703, he was also appointed the first elder of the congregation upon the advice and authorization of the elder and ministers of the church at Hamburg, Germany. In 1708 the first log meeting house was erected on the site occupied by the present structure on Germantown avenue. The Mennonite group among the colonists did not grow rapidly, Germantown being passed by for the newer colonies farther west. By 1712 there was a membership in the two congregations of Germantown and Skippack of ninety-nine, embracing in all perhaps a Mennonite population of about two hundred.

The Germantown Mennonites not only formed the advance guard of the German immigration to America, but they were pioneers in other important respects also. In 1688 they issued the first public protest against slavery on record in America, although the institution had also been forbidden in the Plockhoy colony in 1663. To the German Mennonites the holding of slaves ran counter to both their racial ideals and their religious convictions. The English Quakers still held slaves. It was for

the purpose of showing their disapproval of the practise as well as for the purpose of fostering German immigration that a group of four men in the year mentioned—Pastorious, Lutheran Pietist, Gerrit Hendricks, Mennonite, Derick Op den Graff, Mennonite-Quaker, and Abraham his brother, first Mennonite, but later Quaker and finally free lance, sent a memorial to the Quaker Monthly Meeting protesting against the holding of slaves.

"Those who hold slaves are no better than Turks," the protest declares, "for we have heard that ye most part of such Negers are brought hither against their will and consent, and that many of them are stolen." The institution was also cited in Germany evidently as an argument against further emigration. "For" the protest continues, "this makes an ill report in all those countries of Europe where they hear off, that ye Quackers do here handel men, like they handel there ye cattle and for that reason some have no mind or inclination to come hither."

The English Quakers were not ready yet, however, to champion the cause of absolute freedom. The Monthly Meeting deciding the matter too weighty for their consideration referred it to the Quarterly Meeting, which in turn avoided the subject by passing it on to the Annual Meeting where no further action was taken on the matter.

The Germantown colony also furnishes us an interesting example of a Mennonite political experiment. In 1691 the village was incorporated under the laws of the Province receiving a special charter. The form of government provided for in this first Pennsylvania borough was that of a closed corporation, the corporate members being granted the exclusive right of the franchise, of legislation, and of admitting new members into the corporation. The first corporate members were mostly Mennonites and Mennonite-Quakers, who maintained control of the village government long after they were outnumbered by residents who did not share their religious views, nor their scruples against the use of force in maintaining order. So long as village ordinances and local litigation concerned itself only with stray pigs and line fences there was little difficulty in securing Mennonite officials, but with the building of a jail and the intro-

duction of stocks and the whipping post, they lost their desire for office. As early as 1701 Pastorius complained to Penn that he found it increasingly difficult to find men who would serve in the General Court for "conscience sake," and hoped for relief from the arrival of new immigrants. Several men declined to accept offices to which they had been elected. Finally in 1707, the village lost its charter, and it was merged for political purposes with the township of which it was a part. The Mennonites refused to hold office, but at the same time retained control of the franchise. For this reason we have here the unparalleled instance of a corporation losing its charter because no one could be found who was willing to hold the offices.

The remaining history of the Germantown church can be dismissed with a few words. Later immigrants as we saw passed it by for more favorable lands elsewhere. In 1770 the old log building was replaced by the little stone structure still standing. At that time the congregation numbered only twenty-five. It finally became extinct, but was again revived in 1863, under the pastorate of F. R. S. Hunsicker. At present it has a membership of thirty-one, and is affiliated with the General Conference branch of the church. Insignificant as its later history may have been however, yet the Germantown settlement exerted no mean influence upon the church at large, and indirectly upon the civil and religious history of Philadelphia and the state of Pennsylvania. In the house of van Bebber was held in 1690 the first service of the German Lutheran church in America, and at least ten of the present churches of Philadelphia including one Evangelical, two Episcopal, one Presbyterian, were all first organized in the little Mennonite meeting house. Many of these also drew heavily upon the Mennonites for their membership.

In the list of names prominent in the industrial and political life of Pennsylvania can be found many of the descendants of the first Mennonite settlers. In 1690 William Rittenhouse built on the Wissahicon, now a part of Fairmount Park, the first paper mill in America. His great-grandson, David Rittenhouse, born in 1732, became a celebrated astronomer of his day, and an intimate friend of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. He became

a prominent member of the Assembly during the Revolutionary war and was appointed first director of the United States Mint by George Washington. Among recent prominent descendants of the first Mennonites was the later Governor Samuel Pennypacker, who in addition to his political activities did much to create an interest not only in Mennonite history, but also in that of all Pennsylvania Germans.

CHAPTER X

THE SWISS AND GERMAN PALATINES

The Germantown colonists, as we saw, came principally from Northwest Germany and were of Dutch ancestry. This group, however, was small, and few came from this region after 1700. A much larger immigration was that of the Swiss and German Palatines during the first half of the eighteenth century. We are here concerned only with the Mennonites, but in order to keep the subject of our sketch within proper perspective, we need to remember that during this time tens of thousands of Palatines of every faith known in Germany—Lutherans, Reformed, Catholics, Dunkards, Schwenkfelders, Moravians, Baptists and Mystics, as well as Mennonites settled in Southeastern Pennsylvania and formed the basis of that picturesque element of the Quaker state population commonly known as the Pennsylvania Dutch.

The cause of this immigrant tide was mainly economic pressure, although in the case of some, religious oppression was a contributing factor. During the early eighteenth century there was great poverty and distress throughout the Palatinate. During the war of the Palatinate (1688-1697) the French armies completely devastated the country. Several severe winters soon after, and famine added to the distress. Just at this time, too, came an urgent invitation, widely published, from Queen Anne of England to settle in the American colonies. The climax of distress seems to have been reached in the year 1709, for in that year a sudden emigration fever seems to have seized the Palatines. Some eight or ten thousand during the year poured into England hoping to be transported to America. The English Government, surprised at this sudden inundation of Germans, was hardly prepared to care for them. Most of them were induced to return to Germany; some were settled in Ireland. About six hundred were

transported to the Carolinas where Graffenreid had already established a Swiss colony at New Bern. The next year a number were sent to New York. Only a few families found their way in this year to Pennsylvania. The next year, however, and the years following the latter state became the chief objective of the movement. The Mennonites who formed only a small part of the immigration tide had added reason for leaving the Palatinate. While the larger portion of the settlers were Germans, the Mennonites were Swiss exiles who had been forced to find temporary homes in the Palatinate in 1671 and the years following. These were still living under annoying and oppressive religious restrictions.

The first Mennonite Palatine immigrants joined some Germantown colonists in founding the Skippack settlement on a tract of land bought by Matthias van Bebber in the year 1702, in what is now Perkiomen township, in Montgomery county. Before 1709, however, there were only a few scattered families. According to Penn, in that year six Palatine Mennonite families left London for Pennsylvania, but where they settled is uncertain, undoubtedly on the Skippack, however. This initial colony expanded during the next fifty years by natural increase and by additions from Germany until it formed a Mennonite community on both sides of the Skippack creek ten miles wide extending north through the north central part of Montgomery county, the western part of Bucks county, a small section of eastern Berks and Lehigh counties, southern Northampton and included also a few scattered settlements in Chester county. By the time of the Revolutionary war the following congregations, nearly all still in existence were formed:

"Schiebach, Indian Krik (Franconia), to which belong also Salford Rokkil and Schwammen, Deep Ron (to which belong Berkosen on the Delaware and Aufrieds), Blen, Grooten Swamb, (to which belong Socken and Lower Milford), Hosenok, Lehay, and Term, Matetschen, Schuylkil."

Among the prevailing Mennonite family names in their modern spelling are the following: Funk, Stauffer, Gotschall, Ziegler, Clemmer or Clymer, Roth, Bechtel, Boyer, Moyer, Ber-

gey, Detweiler, Huffman, Gehman, Bauman, Kolb, Pennypacker, Frey, Showalter, Kratz, Oberholtzer, Longenecker, Yoder, Hunsicker, Alderfer, Wambold, Haldeman, Fretz, High, Geisinger, Geil, Benner, Hiestand, Souder, Allabach, Beidler, etc.

An early Mennonite Palatine settlement was made in North Carolina which was still in existence in 1773, but of which little is known since.

By far the largest and most important of the early Palatine colonies, however, was the one established by the Swiss Mennonites on the Pequea creek, a tributary of the Susquehanna in what is now Lancaster county. These pioneers who founded the first white settlement in the region of the fertile Susquehanna were mostly of such Swiss as had been driven into the Palatinate in 1671 and the years following. The Swiss exiles of 1709 and 1710 were not among the earliest comers, although later many of these found their way into Pennsylvania also.

This pioneer group consisted of ten men, "Switzers, lately arrived in the Province" to whom Penn gave in 1710 a warrant for 10,000 acres of land situated "on the northwesterly side of a hill twenty miles easterly from Conestoga near the head of the Perquin creek. The consideration for the entire tract was five hundred pounds sterling money, and one shilling quitrent annually for every hundred acres. The region was "a rich limestone country, beautifully adorned with sugar maple, hickory, and black and white walnut on the border of a delightful stream abounding in the finest trout."

The first settlers were evidently well pleased with their surroundings, for early the next spring (1711) they sent one of their number, Martin Kendig, back to the Palatinate to urge their poverty-stricken and oppressed friends and relatives to join them in their new home. Kendig returned the same year with a number of new families, and during the next fifty years hundreds of Mennonite families from the Palatinate—Swiss and South Germans—were added to the original Pequea colony. For during all these years the Palatines remained poor in Germany and suffered certain religious restrictions in their native land. Their distress was continually aggravated too, by the continued arrival of fresh

exiles from Switzerland. These conditions together with the invitation of the king of England, himself a German, to settle in Pennsylvania, as well as the repeated invitation of relatives already here were responsible for the steady stream of immigrants who came to Pennsylvania during the next half century.

Although a few of the pioneers were men of means, the great majority were too poor to pay their passage money across. The Dutch Mennonites of Amsterdam organized a "Committee of Foreign Needs" to help their needy Swiss and Palatine brethren. By 1732 over three thousand had asked for assistance many of whom were given aid. Among the Germans themselves who were active in behalf of their poor were two elders, Benedict Brechtbuhl and Hans Burghalter, who were untiring in their efforts to relieve distress and in enlisting the aid through many letters of the Dutch Mennonites in behalf of those of their number who needed help. Both of these names are common today in Lancaster county. Burghalter was for many years a minister in the Geroldsheim church in the Palantinate where he died at a ripe old age in 1752.

The year 1717, was one of exceptionally heavy immigration, for many besides Mennonites were now coming to Southeastern Pennsylvania, although the pioneer Pequea colony remained largely Mennonite. This settlement expanded until ultimately the Mennonites occupied nearly all of present rural Lancaster county, with some scattered settlements along the edges of the neighboring counties. By 1727 so many Germans had come to Pennsylvania that the English Provincial authorities became alarmed lest the Germans completely dominate the political and social life of the Province. To discourage further immigration a law was passed in the above year levying a head tax upon every immigrant, and compelling every ship captain to submit a complete list of all new arrivals after that date.

As to the exact number of Mennonites who came to Pennsylvania during the eighteenth century most estimates are too large. The estimate of 100,000 Germans all told may not be much out of the way, but of these the Mennonites formed a very small part. The entire number was certainly not over two thou-

sand families, and likely considerably below that.

By the time of the Revolutionary war which marked the end of this period of German and Mennonite immigration the following family names were common in Lancaster county—Kendig, Miller, Graff, Herr, Overholt, Bowman, Schantz, Weber, Brenneman, Hershey, Brubaker, Baer, Lehman, Witmer, Funk, Shenk, Landes, Huber, Kaufman, Kreider, Boehm, Eby, Brackbill, Burkholder, Stemen, Frick, Erisman, Newcommer, Neff, Boyer, Erb, Reist, Hess, Bookwalter, Nissly, Snavely, Good, Beyer, Musselman, Meylin, Martin, Root, Ebersole, Wenger, Eschleman, Shellenberger, Mellinger, Bamberger, Risser, Schertz, etc.

The Pequea settlement was in the heart of the Indian country. For a time Mennonites and Indians lived on friendly terms, and their children often played together. But as the settlement grew, the Indians moved farther west, and during the later colonial wars the entire frontier from Pennsylvania through to the Virginia settlements often suffered from Indian raids. In 1758 a letter written by several Mennonite ministers to Holland asking for financial help states that two hundred families in Pennsylvania had been robbed of their property by the Indians and fifty persons had been killed. Among these were some Mennonites and Amish.

According to the laws of Pennsylvania only the English and naturalized non-English could bequeathe and inherit property. Since naturalization could be secured only by a special act of the Assembly upon petition, German Mennonites frequently found it difficult to become fullfledged citizens. The Germantown Mennonites were naturalized in a body in 1709. No Lancastrians were naturalized until 1729, and then only after years of petitioning. This act did not apply to the Amish, who had to petition separately in 1742. After the latter year a general act was passed covering all aliens and special petitions were no longer necessary.

As just noted, the Palatine Mennonites were with a few exceptions mostly of the poorer classes and many did not have sufficient means to pay their passage across the Atlantic. Such

as did not receive sufficient help from the Dutch relief committee were forced to seek means elsewhere. It was the practise in those days for poor emigrants to sell their services for a number of years to the ship captain in return for free passage. Such labor then the captain could dispose of as he saw fit. Usually it was sold at public auction to the highest bidder when the ship arrived at Philadelphia. The term of service for an adult was usually four or five years, while a minor served until twenty-one years of age. Persons thus serving for their passage were called Redemptioners. Many of the Pennsylvania immigrants, including not a few Mennonites, were of this class.

The passage across the Atlantic was long and frequently hazardous. In fair weather and under normal conditions ten or twelve weeks was sufficient for the voyage, and suffering was not great, but in case of contrary winds and storms, ships would often be driven far out of their course. The death rate especially in case of small children was often high. In 1732 the ship John and William left Rotterdam with two hundred and twenty passengers, including a number of Mennonites. The ship was seventeen weeks on the way, and forty-four passengers died enroute. In the same year another ship from Rotterdam bound for Philadelphia landed at Marthas Vineyard Island after a voyage covering twenty-four weeks. Provisions became short. The passengers had no bread for eight weeks. So great was their hunger that they scoured the ship for vermin. A rat was rated at eighteen pence by the hungry castaways and a mouse at six pence. Seven persons died of starvation in one night. Of the one hundred and fifty passengers that left Rotterdam only fifty survived, one hundred having starved on the way. The next year the ship Experiment left with one hundred and eighty passengers and arrived at New York with only eighty on board.

These were exceptional cases of course, but even at best a voyage across the ocean in those days was a matter requiring great courage. Added to these hazards beyond human control were others due to the greed of ship owners. Often greedy captains would overcrowd their ships, furnish poor food and by failing to provide proper sanitation greatly increase the death

toll. Gottlieb Mittelberger, who arrived in 1750, wrote a book describing conditions on the immigrant ships in the hope of alleviating the worst conditions. Thirty-two died on his ship. Among the breeders of disease on shipboard he mentioned "foul water full of worms, salted food, biscuits full of worms and spiders, damp, heat, hunger, lice so thick that they had to be scraped off." Warm food was furnished only three times each week, he said, and children under seven usually died from hunger, thirst and itch. The Pennsylvania Assembly finally passed laws specifying the number of passengers that could be placed on board ship, and regulating the quality of food and sanitary conditions in general. For a long time too, strict quarantines were maintained to prevent sick passengers from spreading contagious diseases in the Provinces contracted on board ship due to unsanitary conditions.

The Pequea and Skippack Mennonites were of the small farmer class in their Swiss and Palatine homes, and here too, they became tillers of the soil exclusively, avoiding the towns and cities as they developed later. It was the relatively few Scotch Irish and English who organized and named the townships, cities and other civil units. Although the Mennonites founded the first settlement in Lancaster county and later absorbed nearly the entire county, there are few names on the map outside of a number of cross roads post-offices which would indicate a Germanic origin. Lancaster city was founded by the English settlers and developed into one of the most influential towns of the day. It was seriously considered by the first Congress as the permanent Federal Capital. A Geography of 1816 calls it the largest inland city in America. Although the city is full of the descendants of the pioneer settlers it was only within recent years that members of the church organized a congregation there. There is today within the county a Mennonite population, including all the families, of about twenty-five thousand.

There was little organized church life among the Mennonites. Each congregation was a unit to itself. Occasionally matters of common concern, however, required united action. In 1727, a conference of all the Pennsylvania congregations was

held, just where is not known, to consider among other matters an English translation of their Confession of Faith. The following ministers and congregations were represented at that meeting:

Skippack—Jacob Gotschalk, Henry Kolb, Claes Jansen, Michael Ziegler.

Germantown—John Gorgeas, John Conerads, Claes Rittinghausen.

Conestoga—Hans Burghalter, Christian Heer, Benedict Hirschi, Martin Baer, Johannes Bowman.

Great Swamp—Velte Clemer.

Manatant—Daniel Longenecker, Jacob Begthley.

Frequent, but irregular conferences were held later. By 1844 Christian Herr, a local historian writes: "The Mennonite congregations in Pennsylvania are divided into three general circuits within each of which semi-annual conferences consisting of bishops, elders or ministers and deacons are held for the purpose of consulting each other and devising means to advance the spiritual prosperity of the members."

Among the Palatines were a number of peace sects having much in common with the Mennonites. Among these were the Dunkards, who had their origin in Germany in 1708 and moved bodily to Germantown in 1719. They followed the Mennonites to their Skippack and Pequea settlements where their proselyting zeal gained a number of adherents to their faith. Conrad Beisel, one of their number, withdrew from them in 1728 and founded at Ephrata the Seventh Day Baptist monastic community. The old community house where the brethren lived monk fashion in their cells is still standing, a venerable old reminder of the good old days long past. Several of the early Mennonite pioneers were drawn into this movement. The attempt of Count Zinsendorf to unite all the Pennsylvania Palatines into one church did not seriously affect the Mennonites. Some of them, however, were won to the Wesleyan revival which struck Pennsylvania during the latter quarter of the century. Among them was Martin Boehm, Mennonite bishop at Willow street, who together with Otterbein, a Reformed minister, founded the United Brethren

church, but who later also became one of the pioneer Methodist preachers in Pennsylvania.

About the same time, too, Jacob Engel, Mennonite, became the founder of the River Brethren.

The Mennonites were not a proselyting people, nor were they active in the spreading of their propaganda. Consequently although they lost large numbers to other churches they scarcely ever gained any in return.

One of the chief reasons for the loss of membership, chiefly among the younger people, was the ultra conservatism of the great mass of the Pennsylvania churches. Large, compact communities maintained a much stronger spirit of conservatism than did the smaller, more open daughter colonies established in the States farther west. Lancaster county with some seventy congregation of Old Mennonites and several other groups of conservative branches totaling a population of perhaps some twenty-five thousand souls, is still reluctant to affilitate upon terms of equality even with other congregations of its own branch of the denomination in the western States. Had the Pennsylvania Mennonites been as able to hold their young people in the church as have the Russians they ought to have a membership of at least several hundred thousand today.

An interesting question for study in connection with the daily life of the Pennsylvania Mennonites is that of their language, the so-called Pennsylvania Dutch. This dialect which is not peculiar to the Mennonites, but common to all Pennsylvania Germans is a modification of the South German dialects mixed with an occasional English word. The following extract from Harbaugh's—"Heemweh" illustrates the language once common among the Mennonites of Southeastern Pennsylvania in the home and pulpit, and still the prevailing tongue in some parts, over two hundred years since it was first introduced:

"Ich wees net, soll ich nei' ins Haus,
Ich zitter an d'r Dheer
Es is woll alles voll inseid
Und doch is alles leer,
'S net meh heem wie's eemol war,

Un kann's ah nimme sei:
Was naus mit unsere Eltere geht
Kummt ewig nimme nei'
Die Friede hat der Dodt gearnt
Das Trauerdheel is mei."

As just intimated with the exception of the more liberal General Conference wing of the church in recent years, the Pennsylvania congregations were not able to hold many of their talented young men in the church. This does not mean, however, that they were less capable than other people if they were given a chance. Hundreds of young men went out into the world to try their fortunes, and succeeded. A long list of American College Presidents and University Professors, Congressmen, Judges, Literary men and Captains of Industry have had a Pennsylvania Mennonite ancestry, but they did not remain with their faith.

CHAPTER XI.

EXPANSION OF THE PEQUEA COLONY (1709-1800)

Before the middle of the eighteenth century the best lands of Southeastern Pennsylvania had been occupied by the German and Scotch Irish immigrants. Consequently the children of the pioneers as well as later immigrants were forced to push the frontier line of settlements up the river valleys into the interior of Pennsylvania and Virginia. In the very front of this advancing tide were usually found a number of Mennonites who settled in small colonies far out on the frontier where land was cheap, and where room for expansion was ample.

Before the French and Indian war, Lancaster county Mennonites, following the advancing tide of settlements planted colonies across the Susquehanna in York county, and then through the Cumberland valley in Cumberland and Franklin counties, Pennsylvania, and Washington county, Maryland. In the latter region they were numerous enough by 1776 to demand some recognition upon their refusal to bear arms during the Revolutionary war from the state convention, which was then drafting a new constitution.

The Cumberland valley leads into the beautiful Shenandoah of Virginia. Here at Massenutin along the South Fork of the Shenandoah near what is now Luray, in Page county, in 1729, in the very first German settlement in the valley, were found a few Lancaster county Mennonites. In a few years they formed the largest contingent of the Germans in that pioneer settlement, although there were perhaps never more than several dozen families in that place. These settlements in Page county were never prosperous, and have long since become extinct. During the French and Indian war the Indians made raids into the

valley, and carried off many of the settlers. In one of these raids, in 1766, John Rhodes, a Mennonite minister, his wife, three sons and two daughters were killed by the Indians, and a surviving son was carried away who after three years of captivity returned to his friends. Many families were compelled to return to Pennsylvania during these times. This colony, too, was located in what was called the Northern Neck, a region to which Lord Fairfax for many years tried to establish a private claim. During this controversy many of the settlers, including the Mennonites, feeling themselves insecure in their land titles moved farther up into the valley in what is now Rockingham and Augusta counties. By about 1800, the Mennonites had occupied the greater part of the Linville valley, which embraced the region extending from Linville creek on the east to the North Mountain on the west, and the Shenandoah on the north, to Linville and Singers Glen on the south, a district about ten miles long by eight miles wide. After 1780, however, when Harrisonburg was founded as the county seat of the newly organized Rockingham county, many of the Linville settlers located west of the new town, where a large community has since developed.

The Virginia Mennonites were the only members of their faith within the late slaveholding Confederacy. To their credit be it said that, true to their religious principles, they never held slaves. As late as 1864, at a time when it took great courage in the South to oppose the institution, they went on record in a conference resolution to the following effect:

"Decided that inasmuch as it is against our creed and discipline to own or traffic in slaves, so it is also forbidden a brother to hire a slave unless such slave be entitled to receive the pay for such labor by the consent of the owner. But where neighbors exchange labor, the labor of slaves may be received."

It is needless to say that this traditional opposition to both slavery and war brought upon them serious trouble during the Civil war, but these experiences are related elsewhere in this book.

During the first half of the last century the Virginia Mennonites developed considerable interest in literary activities. Among the early Virginia families were the Funks. One of these,

Joseph Funk, did much for the music and literary interests of the church. He was a school teacher, and also a publisher of Mennonite and music books. In 1832 he compiled a book of sacred melodies called "Harmonia Sacra," which had a wide circulation not only through Virginia, but throughout the Mennonite church at large. It went through seventeen editions, the last one appearing in the latter seventies of the past century. In 1837 he also translated and published the so-called "Long" Confession of Faith of thirty-three articles found in the Martyrs' Mirror, together with "Nine Reflections" by Bishop Peter Burkholder.

In the meantime the tide of settlement had ascended the Susquehanna and Juniata. In 1772 John Graybil from Lancaster county began a colony on the Mahantago in Snyder county, near what is now Richfield. A few small communities were established in Juniata county also. A little later a large settlement of Amish was made in Mifflin county. About the same time, too, in 1767, Christian Blauch founded a Mennonite settlement near the headwaters of the Ohio river. By 1800 large colonies of both Amish and Mennonites were found in Fayette and Westmoreland counties, and scattered settlements in Cambria, Blair, Center, Clearfield and Butler counties.

By the close of the eighteenth century then the Mennonites of the southeastern Pennsylvania had appeared in the fertile valleys of interior Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. Few new communities have been established in these three states since then. With the opening up of the Northwest Territory, however, these pioneer settlements became in turn mother communities of many congregations organized early in the next century in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

CHAPTER XII

THE AMISH

The European origin of the Amish branch of the church has been related elsewhere, and needs no repetition here. Just when the first Amish came to America is not certain, but it is quite likely that a few stray members of the faith were to be found among the earliest Palatine immigrants. According to a letter written by Penn in 1709, among the Palatine immigrants of that year were "divers Mennonists," who may have been Amish. Among the Bernese exiles of 1711, some of whom soon after came to Pennsylvania, were a number of Amish, although no Amish names appear in the records before 1715. From 1727 on, however, the time when complete lists were required of all ship captains, such names are frequently found among the ship passenger lists. In that year there arrived, among others, Jacob Mast, Peter Zug and Ulrich Pitscha. Between 1727 and 1750 familiar names are numerous, only a few of which can be mentioned here. In 1742 Moritz Zug and his two brothers, John and Christian, founders of a long line of Zooks, arrived at Philadelphia on the Francis Elizabeth. In 1744, among others, came Peter Jutzy, Jacob Hartzler, founder of another numerous Amish family, came in 1749, followed the next year by the Blauch brothers, Christian and Hans, and by Andreas Hoelly. Nicholas Stolzfus landed at Philadelphia in 1766, and Peter Bietch in 1767. Familiar names appear in these passenger lists as late as the Revolutionary war, after which Palatine immigration practically ceased.

Just where these earliest immigrants first located is not quite certain, but one of the very earliest congregations was to be found in the northwest corner of present Berks county, along North Kill creek. By 1742 this community was strong enough

to petition the Provincial Assembly for exemption from the oath in naturalization, a privilege which was granted by the Assembly. Another early community was established in Lancaster county at the headwaters of the Conestoga. From these two original communities, other settlements were made near by. Not many are left now in Berks county, but in Lancaster there is still a community of something over twelve hundred members. The entire European immigration could not have been large, as is shown by the comparatively small number of family names among the Pennsylvania Amish and their descendants today. The following list in their modern spelling is nearly all inclusive,—Yoder, Zook, Mast, Plank, Stolzfus, Stutsman, Hooly, Beiler, Koenig, Beechy, Miller, Hostetler, Kaufman, Jutzi, Troyer, Umble, Gnaegi, Hartzler, Lapp, Hershberger, Smucker and a few others.

From these two pioneer settlements all the later colonies in Pennsylvania—in Somerset, Westmoreland, Mifflin, and Juniata counties were made, and indirectly many more in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and other western States.

The Amish do not seem to have followed the Mennonites and other Germans south into the Shenandoah valley. The first colony to leave the home community seems to have crossed the Alleghanies into southwestern Pennsylvania. Soon after the French and Indian war, a number of settlers from Berks, Chester and Lebanon counties located in what is now Somerset county. Jacob and Christian Blauch, who undoubtedly were Amishmen, located on government land in what is now Conemaugh township as early as 1767. They were followed by a number of others before the Revolutionary war. Before the close of the century the largest of all the Berks and Lancaster county daughter colonies were founded in the beautiful Kishocoquillas valley in what is now Mifflin county. This narrow, beautiful and fertile valley, hemmed in on both sides by picturesque mountains, now contains a solid Amish community covering an area three or four miles wide and fifteen miles long in the general region below Belleville. This settlement in turn during the next century furnished a large share of the Amish colonies in the western States.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Pennsyl-

vanians founded numerous Amish communities in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska and other western States. The first pioneers to enter Ohio were "Yockle" Miller and his family, who located on Sugar creek in what is now Tuscarawas county in 1808. Later Pennsylvania colonies were established in Holmes, Wayne, Logan, Champaign and Geauga counties.

By 1840 the westward tide had reached Indiana. A group of landseekers from Somerset county, including preacher Joe Miller, after visiting Iowa and walking back through Indiana, decided to locate in what is now Elkhart county east of what is now Goshen. From Pennsylvania and some of the older Ohio settlements there were developed within the next twenty-five years numerous congregations in Elkhart, Noble, LaGrange, Marshall, Adams, Newton, Howard, Miami, Allen, Jasper, Davis and Brown counties.

Between 1848 and 1852 several Mifflin county families founded the Rock creek congregation in McClean county, Illinois. After the Civil war another large community of conservative Pennsylvanians largely from Somerset county established the Moultrie and Douglas county congregations.

In Iowa the first colony of native Amish was established in 1846 in Johnson county by a number of Pennsylvanians. In more recent years the lure of cheap lands has called numerous colonies from all these older States to Nebraska, Kansas, Arkansas, Oregon, Colorado, Oklahoma, the Dakotas, Montana and Idaho.

Renewed Immigration

In the meantime the tide of European immigration, lasting from about 1820 to 1860, and which is described elsewhere, brought with it a number of Amish from South Germany and France. The causes of this immigrant movement being given elsewhere need not be repeated here. These came largely from Alsace, Lorraine, Bavaria and several groups from Hesse-Darmstadt. The pioneer of the Amish contingent was a Christian Augsburger from near Strasburg, who came to America in 1817. After spending a few months in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, he went back to France, but returned in 1819, and together with five other families located in what is now Butler county, Ohio.

Carlock, Illinois, Mennonite Church, Central Conference.

Another pioneer was Christian Nafziger, a Bavarian, who landed at New Orleans in 1822. From here he found his way to Lancaster county, walking a part of the way, and from there to Waterloo county, Ontario, in search of cheap lands for prospective settlers. He secured an option on a tract of land and went back to Bavaria, but did not return until 1826. In the meantime, in 1824, a German colony had been established in Canada. About the same time, too, a small group located in Stark county, Ohio.

During the next twenty-five years numerous Amish families and young people followed these pioneers to America. Lancaster county was the first stopping place. From there prospective settlers would come to Butler county, Ohio, by way of Pittsburgh and the Ohio river, and from that settlement as a distributing station would seek a location in new regions where cheap lands could be had in large quantities, appearing usually among the very first settlers in their respective communities.

In 1830 a colony was established in Lewis county, New York. Beginning with 1831 and lasting to 1850 a number of Alsatians arrived in Illinois—some by way of New York or Philadelphia, Lancaster, Pittsburgh and the Ohio-Mississippi-Illinois rivers; others by way of New Orleans and the river route, and began a large settlement along the Illinois river in what are now Tazewell, Woodford and Bureau counties. In Woodford county two years after their first settlement was made, they organized the earliest German church in the State, and the second of any denomination within the county. In 1834 also the large settlement of European Amish was begun in Fulton county, Ohio, and before 1840 a small colony was located in Southeastern Iowa. The Hessians formed a group rather by themselves and founded separate congregations in Butler county, Ohio, and McClean and Putnam counties, Illinois. Many of these Amish were originally of Swiss descent; others were South Germans. Among the family names of the immigrants of this period the following were the most common,—Naffziger, Oesch, Virkler, Gascho, Schertz, Fahrney, Roggy, Rupp, Stucki, Gerber, Guengerich, Belsley, Auer, Zehr, Moser, Burcky, Roth, Litwiller, Schrock, Steinman, Al-

brecht, Bachman, Kennel, Imhoff, Sommer, Beck, Slagel, Springer, Guth, Sweitzer, Rediger, Mosiman, Augsburger, Salzman, Gauchy, Kinsinger, Schlabach, Risser, Kamp, Bechtel, Schmidt, Ruvenacht, Gundy, Egly, Klopfenstein, Raber, Swartzentraub.

Up to about the middle of the last century the Amish were one body so far as their faith and practise was concerned, although, having no conferences, there was no organized church life beyond that of the congregation itself. They were exceedingly conservative, but differed from the Mennonites mainly in a rigid application of the practise of "shunning" to all excommunicated members. All men were required to wear beards, as had been the custom of their fathers in Europe for centuries, but mustaches were forbidden. Parting of the hair, which had to be cut long and after a prescribed form, was also prohibited. All clothes must be home made and fastened with hooks and eyes instead of buttons. Suspenders, too, were in the class of proscribed vanities. Up to 1850 there were no meeting houses. At first in Europe scattered settlements, long distances to the place of meeting, necessity for secrecy and poverty—all forbade the erection of meeting houses. What was thus once a necessity in Europe became an established custom in America, still perpetuated among the Old Order Amish. Services held every three or four weeks were long, lasting often for several hours. Dinner was served by the host at whose home the meeting was held. The speech of every-day conversation was the Pennsylvania Dutch among the Pennsylvanians, and the Alsatian and South German dialects among the recent immigrants. The language of public worship was German until within the past few years. The old Ausbund was used exclusively as the authorized hymnal, and more than one part singing was strictly forbidden. Ministers were selected by lot and received no support. If the lot struck one unqualified for the ministry, as it often did, there was no escape from what was regarded as a direct call from God, for every applicant for baptism was made to promise that he would accept such a call before he was received into membership.

The women, too, were dressed severely plain. They wore tight fitting plain clothes, without laces or frills, with capes and

short aprons. During worship they wore a black cap as a devotional covering. This was the conventional garb from which no sister in good standing dared to deviate the slightest on pain of church discipline.

In their house furnishings and every-day conveniences the same rigid austerity was prescribed by the Amish. Everything new was tabooed. Under the ban were musical instruments of all kinds, pictures on the walls, curtains, carpets and every bit of unnecessary decoration or adornment. During the middle of the last century the more progressive members introduced top buggies when these conveniences came into vogue. During the same period among the Mennonites in some of the eastern sections the old-fashioned dearborns were in good standing, but "falling" top buggies were not. Among both Amish and Mennonites this new and more comfortable means of transportation gained the sanction of those in authority only after much opposition and numerous church meetings. Failure to comply minutely with these various regulations was punishable by excommunication. At one time, some fifty years ago, a member in an Illinois congregation was excommunicated for insisting on wearing a starched shirt bosom, at that time a forbidden bit of wearing apparel.

In spite of these rigid austerities, however, the Amish were sound to the core in the fundamental virtues. They were honest, industrious, God-fearing, religious, kind-hearted and willing to help in times of need. They were usually among the most successful farmers in their communities, and always maintained the respect of those with whom they came in contact.

Owing to the scattered settlements among the Pennsylvania descendants, and to the introduction of new blood from Europe among the Amish, a series of local differences began to appear about the middle of the last century. In 1850 a dispute arose in Mifflin county, Pennsylvania, which later spread to Wayne county, Ohio, over the method of baptism, whether it was to be administered in the house or outside in a running stream; at the same time, too, the Butler county Amish began to use musical instruments in their homes; the preachers of Wayne county

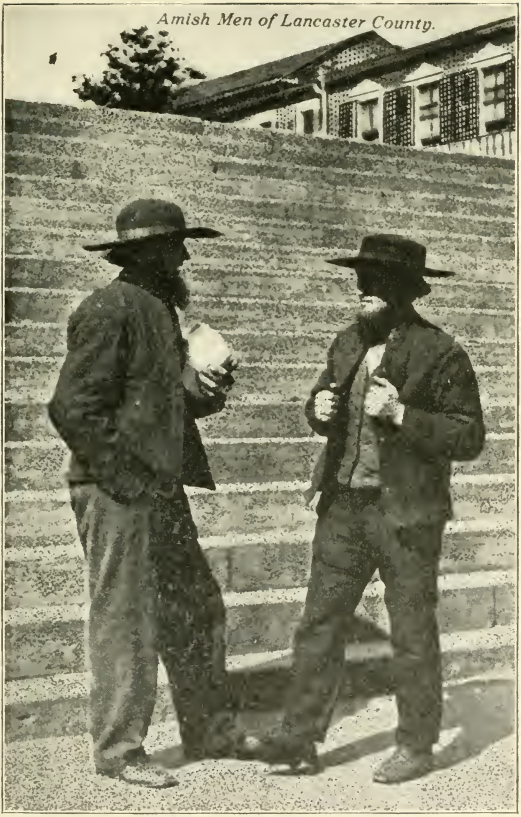
prayed without their prayer books, and had discarded the old time-honored Ausbund for more modern hymnals; in some congregations, too, the ministers discarded the old custom of withdrawing to the little side room (the abrat or kaemmerle) before the services.

It was for the purpose of harmonizing these and other discordant elements that a general conference was finally called of all the Amish churches of America. The first session of this series of conferences was held in a capacious barn in Wayne county, Ohio, in 1862, at which seventy-two ministers were present from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. Annual sessions were held after this for twelve years, the last meeting being held at Eureka, Illinois, in 1878, without accomplishing the purpose for which the conferences were first called.

During this time the church became divided into several permanent factions. On the one hand several liberal congregations in Butler county, Ohio, and McClean county, Illinois, adopted a more liberal policy. On the other hand a goodly number of the more conservative congregations withdrew from the conference even before its last session was held, and together with those which never favored it, continued in the good old ways of the fathers. These are now usually spoken of as the Old Order. In between these two were left a number of congregations that later organized themselves again into conferences, and occupied at first a rather middle position on questions of church practise, but now are more progressive. These have gradually assumed the name of Amish-Mennonite, being practically in sympathy in every respect with the main body of the earlier American Mennonites, spoken of in this book as the Old Mennonites.

Old Order

The Old Order have maintained to the present time all the good old customs of the fathers without the slightest departure. Hooks and eyes, beards, aprons, capes, old fashioned bonnets, suspenderless trousers, broadbrimmed hats and long hair are



Two Old Amish Brethren of Lancaster County, Pa.

prescribed as rigidly as ever. New practises and improvements are sparingly adopted. Under the ban are still Sunday schools, revival meetings, conferences, high school education, top buggies, dashboards, furnaces, curtains, musical instruments, "store" suspenders or suspenders of any sort, and in some localities even windmills and sewing machines. Strange to say among this list of worldly contrivances the automobile has quite generally slipped in as a necessity and not a luxury. In some communities members are not permitted to install telephones into their houses, but may use those of their worldly neighbors. Their houses are usually painted a pure white, but in some localities in Indiana and Pennsylvania they show a partiality for painting gates and outbuildings blue, for which reason they are sometimes known locally as "Blue Amish."

While in general they are still sound morally, they are addicted to certain social practises and moral ideals that are not wholesome. Among these are their courting customs, which resemble in some respects the old New England custom of bundling, and the results of which are often no less unfortunate.

The chief centers of the Old Amish are Lancaster and Mifflin counties, Pennsylvania; Holmes, Tuscarawas and Geauga counties, Ohio; LaGrange, Howard, Elkhart and Davis counties, Indiana; Douglas and Moultries counties, Illinois; and Washington and Johnson counties, Iowa, with smaller communities in Ontario, Canada, and in the western States of the United States.

It was not to be expected, of course, that a church so individualistic and unorganized as the Amish could long continue without serious internal dissensions. In addition to the differences already mentioned they passed through three such periods during the middle of the last century, mostly in Indiana and Illinois.

New Amish

The first of these difficulties was the one with the so-called "New Amish" or "Neu Taeufer," whose origin in Switzerland has already been described in another chapter. These people were locally called New Amish in Illinois, not because they sprang from the Amish, but because in Illinois the latter furnished the

earliest converts. The adherents of the new faith spoke of themselves as the "Glaeubige" (the fatihful ones),but more recently they have assumed the name officially of the "Apostolic Church." As already suggested, the first of these Neu Tauefer came to Ohio from Switzerland in 1846, where they secured a small following among their countrymen in the Wayne county Mennonite settlement. In 1852 several more appeared among the Amish in Lewis county, New York, where they caused the usual disturbance. From the latter place a few zealous proselytes to the new following arrived soon after among some of their kinsmen in the Amish settlement in Woodford county, Illinois, where they secured a few more disgruntled church members to their faith. In 1862 one of the leaders from Illinois established a small following in Butler county, Ohio. Illinois has remained, however, the center of the new sect. The growth for many years was slow. By 1877 there were only eighty-nine members in all these places, and the number would have remained insignificant had not a large number of immigrants from Switzerland within recent years been added to the original nucleus. There are at present a number of large congregations in Woodford, Tazewell and Livingston counties, Illinois, aggregating perhaps several thousand members. Small communities have lately also been established in Indiana and other States.

They still maintain the same spirit of exclusiveness and superior piety which characterized them in Switzerland. Their creed forbids them to have any religious association with those of other church affiliations. They dare not listen to preaching or praying, or any religious exercise conducted by members of another church, hence they never visit other churches. They do not attend the funerals of even their nearest relatives if not members of their own sect. All outside of their own fold are of the "world" and sure to be eternally damned. With the "world" they can have no religious affiliation whatsoever, and very little social intercourse. They carry on no missionary enterprise, and are not in favor of higher education. They still insist upon a rigid observance of shunning the excommunicated, of whom they usually have a goodly number among them. Even husband,

Orphans Home, Flanagan, Illinois, Defenseless Mennonites.

wife and children must observe the practise among themselves in case a member of the family has come under church discipline. The practise has led within recent years to a number of domestic tragedies in Central Illinois. In one case an entire family was wiped out. They are a good people, however. They are honest, industrious, and prosperous, occupying the finest farms and best kept farm buildings within the rich corn-belt of Central Illinois.

Defenceless Mennonites

Hardly had the New Amish disturbance blown over when another little storm center developed among the Amish, this time in Adams county, Indiana, and later also in Illinois and Ohio. The leader of this new movement was Henry Egli, a minister in the Amish congregation of that place. About 1864 Egli began to urge the necessity of a definite conversion experience in the religious life. His charge that the religious life of the time was too formal and was not based on a vital experience may have had some ground, but the contention that the austere, simply dressed brethren of that day were too liberal in their dress regulations can hardly be taken seriously. In 1865 Egli withdrew from the old church, and formed a new one which soon included the larger part of his former congregation. The movement later spread to Livingston and Tazewell counties, Illinois, where several large congregations have since developed.

At first Egli's followers were quite strict in their dress regulations, rather exclusive in their religious affiliations, and rebaptized all those of their members who had come from the old church who could not confess that they had been truly converted before, a confession which of course under the circumstances few could make. In recent years the old differences have largely disappeared, and the younger generation have forgotten that they are not of one faith. They are optional immersionists, and have discarded the former dress restrictions. In every other respect their faith and practise is identical with that of the Amish Mennonites and the other more conservative wings of the Mennonite denomination. At first they were spoken of as the "Egli Amish" by members of the church which they left, but they in

turn officially assumed the name Defenceless Mennonites. The present membership in Illinois, Indiana and Ohio and a few small communities in other States is about one thousand.

Central Illinois Mennonites

Hard upon the Egli defection followed the trouble between Joseph Stuckey and the Ministers' Conference already mentioned. Stuckey was a bishop in the Rock Creek, Illinois, congregation, and was one of the leading men in the entire church. He was a man of strong personality, a writer of some ability, and talented with more than ordinary organizing power, and was one of the leading spirits in the Ministers' Conference. Being rather more liberal minded on religious questions than most of his fellow ministers, he occasionally was brought into friction with other leaders even before 1870, the time his troubles began with the Conference. About this time a dispute arose between Stuckey and the Conference relative to the expulsion of a liberal minded member of the former's congregation by the name of Joseph Yoder. The Conference ordered Yoder's excommunication on the ground that he did not believe in eternal punishment, having expressed this sentiment in a poem called "Die Frohe Botschaft." Stuckey, however, refused to carry out the order. The question was taken up at the annual sessions of 1870-71-72 without a final agreement. Finally a committee of Easterners was appointed to make a thorough investigation of the whole matter and dispose of the case. This committee, made up of ultra-conservative Pennsylvanians, decided adversely to Stuckey and his congregation, which stood by him in this controversy. The committee further decided that Stuckey and his congregation, unless he complied with their findings, would no longer be regarded as members of the Conference. Most of the other Illinois congregations regarded this decision as final, and it was announced in the various churches that Stuckey and his following were no longer one of them. Stuckey did not attend the later Conference sessions, which ceased a few years later on. There was no further formal division, however. The Illinois congregations were independent of each other and each went its own way. Had it not been for the

influence later of the conservative Mennonite ministers of the East it is more than likely that to-day there would be little difference even in matters of dress between the Amish Mennonites and the followers of Joseph Stuckey. When, however, in the late eighties the Western District Conference of the Amish was organized Stuckey's congregations were not included, and since then have been considered a separate branch of the church. Stuckey not only retained control of his home church during this controversy, but also of a small congregation at Meadows which he had been serving as an elder. Soon other congregations joined his in a more liberal church policy and new ones were formed. What was for a long time known as the "Stuckey" following grew and prospered largely at the expense of the old church until to-day there is a membership of about twenty-five hundred, nearly all in Central Illinois, although there are several churches in Nebraska and Indiana. In 1899 these congregations organized a conference and assumed the name of Illinois Conference of Mennonites.* Outside of the removal of dress restrictions the Illinois Conference of Mennonites differs little from the Amish Mennonites and the Old Mennonites in their faith and practise. The Conference maintains several city missions and also a station in Africa, and recently has been one of the strongest supporters of Bluffton College. Its leaders are earnest men devoted to the cause of the church.

All of these progressive elements, including the Amish-Mennonites, of what was once known as the Amish wing of the church, have made rapid progress during the past decade in religious and educational endeavor. The missionary interest is strong; the young people are attending High Schools and Colleges in increasing numbers; training for the ministry is receiving more attention than formerly; and in keeping with these new interests there has also developed a finer type of religious and social idealism. All this advance, especially among the younger people, which falls almost entirely within the brief span of the present rising generation, speaks well for the future usefulness of the church.

*Since changed to Central Conference of Mennonites.

CHAPTER XIII

DURING THE REVOLUTION

The Mennonites, consistent with their non-resistant principles, did not participate in the Revolutionary war on either side. Most of them undoubtedly sympathized with the colonists, but there were some who rather favored the opposite side. To the usual opposition to all war these found in this particular war another objection, namely, that it was a rebellion against constituted authority, and their religion bade them to pray for their rulers, not to rise up against them. A number were perhaps out and out Tories in their sympathies. These migrated to Canada after the war.

From actual military drill which was prescribed by the Pennsylvania Assembly, the Mennonites and other peace denominations were exempt, but they were to pay an extra sum of money called a fine for this privilege. These fines were paid with little objection, but as to whether they could consistently pay the special war tax which was levied upon all the inhabitants, there was some difference of opinion. Many of them joined the Quakers in their opposition to helping the war with their means as well as by actual bearing of arms. A discussion of this question in Montgomery county, in 1776, led to the first division in the American Mennonite church. In that year a meeting was held in Indianfield township in the above county for the purpose of choosing three men to represent the township in a general State convention which was to determine whether Pennsylvania should join the other colonies in declaring her independence from England. Most of the Mennonites who were present declared that since they were a "defenceless people and could neither institute nor destroy any government, they could not interfere in tearing themselves away from the king."

Among those present was a minister, Christian Funk, who, though a staunch defender of the cause of Congress, did not at this time seem to offer any serious objection to the above declaration. The following year, however, when some of his fellow ministers declared that their non-resistant principles forbade them pay a special war tax of "three pounds and ten shillings," Funk protested and maintained that the tax should be paid. "Were Christ here," he said, "He would say, Give to Congress that which belongs to Congress and to God that which belongs to God." Andrew Ziegler, the spokesman for the opposite party, replied,—"I would as soon go to war as pay the three pounds and ten shillings." Funk was finally excommunicated, in 1778, for these views, and together with those who believed as he did, he organized several small congregations of his own throughout the county. This small group of people, called "Funkites," retained a separate organization until 1850, when long after the participants in the original dispute had died, it became extinct.

The majority of the Mennonites of Pennsylvania objected not only to the payment of the special war tax, but also to the new oath of allegiance which was required of all citizens after the Declaration of Independence. Not that they did not wish to be loyal citizens of Pennsylvania, but in addition to their opposition to all oaths, they feared that this one in particular would commit them to the cause of the war. Many refused to take the oath, and some who took it were excommunicated from the church. The State authorities, however, knowing their scruples against both the oath and war, and that they were not disloyal, were inclined to treat them leniently.

Although the Mennonites did not bear arms during the war, several of the engagements took place in Mennonite communities. The battle of Germantown was fought in the vicinity of the little Mennonite meeting house which shows the scars of battle to this day. The Valley Forge winter quarters were located in the Skippack region. A number of the Mennonites were impressed into the service at the time, while Washington's headquarters were in the home of a Mennonite preacher. In Lancaster county, too, the horses and wagons of the rich farmers were frequently im-

pressed into the quartermaster service during the Pennsylvania campaigns.

Another event, the apostacy of Martin Boehm, while not a result of the war, yet occurred at this time and may as well be told here as elsewhere. Boehm was a Mennonite bishop at Willow Street in Lancaster county. In a visit to Virginia in 1761 he came into contact with a revival movement and was greatly influenced by it. By 1775 he had aroused the ill-will of his fellow ministers by his fiery preaching and was expelled. In the meantime the Methodists had entered Pennsylvania, and Boehm soon cast his lot with them, becoming one of the pioneer Methodist preachers in Lancaster county. In 1800, together with Otterbein, a minister of the Reformed church, he also became the founder of what is now known as the United Brethren church. In 1805 he was elected a bishop in the United Brethren church, but in the meantime also had his name enrolled in the Methodist class book. Whether he was a Methodist or United Brethren was perhaps not quite clear to his friends, as the following epitaph which appears on the stone marking his last resting place, would indicate,—

"Here lie the remains of Rev. Martin Boehm, who departed this life (after a short illness) March 23, 1812, in the 87th year of his age. Fifty-four years he fully preached the Gospel to thousands, and labored in the Vineyard of the Lord Jesus in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia among many denominations, but particularly the Mennonites, United Brethren and Methodists, with the last of whom he lived and died in fellowship. He not only gave himself and his services to the church, but also fed the Lord's prophets and people by multitudes. He was an Israelite in whom was no guile. His end was peace."

CHAPTER XIV

ONTARIO

During the latter part of the eighteenth century because of population pressure, the younger people of Lancaster, Bucks and Montgomery counties found it necessary to search elsewhere for cheap lands for future homes. After the war, colonization societies had been formed for the purpose of helping the poorer members of the old communities to find new homes. At the same time, too, as we saw, there were those who were not in sympathy with the separation from the English crown. The period of anarchy following the close of the war did not strengthen the confidence of this class in the new government. To all of these the large tracts of cheap lands in Ontario, not far from the American line, seemed to offer an opportunity both for bettering their material condition, and at the same time remaining under the rule of the English king.

Among the first to turn their eyes in this direction were a small group of men from Plumstead, in Bucks county. As early as 1786 John, Dilman, Jacob and Stoffel Kolb, Franklin Albright and Frederich Hahn left this community for the Canadian border. Following the Susquehanna, they crossed the boundary at Niagara, and located in Lincoln county, about twenty miles from Niagara Falls. Later a number of other settlers were added to this community, which became known as "The Twenty." Other small groups also soon after located in Wellington, Welland and Haldeman counties.

In the meantime another colony was located farther out on the frontier. In 1799 Joseph Schoerg and Samuel Betzner from Franklin county, crossed Pennsylvania and New York for the region beyond the Great Lakes. After spending the winter on the Canadian side near Niagara, the next spring they started

out on a tour of investigation, and finally selected the fertile and heavily timbered region along the Grand river in what is now Waterloo county for their future homes. This part of the country was still unsettled at the time except by a few fur traders, who had erected temporary quarters along the banks of the river. Returning to Niagara, these two pioneers located the next spring with their families about thirty miles beyond Dundas, near the present villages of Doon and Blair, in Waterloo county, which at that time marked the frontier line. Later in the same year other families from Lancaster county arrived in Conestoga wagons, and settled in the same region. For the next thirty years numerous colonists were added to the original settlement, and the colony grew until all of the present Waterloo township and large parts of surrounding townships were occupied by Mennonites. They came principally from Bucks and Lancaster, but also from all the other counties of Southeastern Pennsylvania in which Mennonites were found. A little village developed in the center of the settlement, which at first was called Ebytown, but according to a traveller in 1833 was then known as Rumbletown. Soon after, however, it became known as Berlin, but during the recent war the name was again changed by a vote of the people themselves to Kitchener.

The most common Canadian Mennonite names are Bauman, Bechtel, Bergey, Betzner, Brubacher, Burkholder, Cressman, Detweiler, Eby, Erb, Gehman, Gingerich, Reist, Sherk, Stauffer, Groff, Hagey, Hallman, Kolb, Horst, Honsberger, Hoffman, Martin, Moyer, Musselman, Reichert, Weaver, Snyder, Shoemaker, Shantz, Witmer, Hoover, Wismer, etc.

The first settlers all bought their land from a speculator by the name of Richard Beasley, who owned the greater part of Waterloo township, at a price ranging from one to four dollars per acre. In 1803 it was accidentally discovered that the land sold by Beasley was covered by a twenty thousand dollar mortgage. Immigration ceased and the colony was about to be broken up, when, upon the advice of Hans Eby, a group of Lancaster county Mennonites formed a company similar to our present stock companies and bought the entire township, assuming

the mortgage. The twenty thousand dollars in silver, it is said, was carried in a box in a light wagon to Canada, where it was used to liquidate the mortgage, for which the company in turn received a clear title to 60,000 acres of land in what is now Waterloo county. The entire tract was divided into lots of 448 acres each, and each stockholder drew by lot his share of the tract according to the amount of stock he held.

A little later, in 1824, a colony of European Amish immigrants also founded a settlement in Waterloo county.

In the meantime, in 1803, another settlement had been begun in York county, near the present town of Markham, about twenty miles north of Toronto. This community consists at present of four small congregations.

These early pioneers were of hardy stock and endured the usual pioneer hardships. The journey from the Pennsylvania settlements to Waterloo covered about five hundred miles, and had to be made over the Pennsylvania mountains through heavy forests and almost impassable swamps. Some went on horseback, but most of them loaded their household goods on the well-known Conestoga wagons to which were hitched four or five horses. They frequently drove their cattle with them. The route usually followed led across the Alleghany mountains, thence up the Susquehanna through New York, and struck the Niagara a little below Buffalo. From here the journey was made to Dundas by way of what is now Hamilton, thence across the "Beverly Swamp" to the new settlement on the Grand. The time occupied on the journey was from four to eight weeks. This region was heavily wooded and the first few years were occupied largely by the settlers in making small clearings from which they might extract a scant living, and in erecting their first log-cabins.

During the War of 1812 communication between the Canadians and their Pennsylvania brethren was broken off, and there was no immigration for a few years, although it was resumed soon after. The Mennonites were not forced to serve in the army, but a number were impressed with their teams into the transportation service in the Niagara region during the battles that were fought in that vicinity. After the war the British

Government made good all the losses suffered, and paid for the time of actual service at a fair price.

Among the early pioneers was Benjamin Eby, who came to Waterloo county in 1806. Three years later he was ordained to the ministry, and in 1812 to the office of bishop. From this time until his death in 1853, he was one of the leaders in all the important events in the history of the Canadian church. In 1813 the first Mennonite meeting house, built of logs, was erected on his farm, and was known as the Eby church. Here Bishop Eby preached and also taught school during the winter months for many years. He was a man of more than ordinary talent and wrote several books, the most important of which was a short history of the Mennonites, first published in 1841 at Berlin, Ontario, in the German language.

The Canadians, of course, were typical Pennsylvanians, and brought with them Pennsylvania customs, Pennsylvania conservatism and the Pennsylvania Dutch speech.

Like the Mennonites elsewhere they did not escape internal dissensions. About the middle of the last century there began a movement in Lincoln county in favor of more aggressive church work. The leader of this cause was Daniel Hoch, a minister, who advocated more modern methods of church work, and especially greater evangelistic activity. The result of this agitation was a church division. Hoch soon found a kindred spirit in Oberholtzer, who was leading a similar movement in Pennsylvania. He warmly seconded the efforts of Oberholtzer in 1860 for the establishing of a general conference of a number of the liberal congregations in America, and was one of the promoters of that enterprise. His followers in Canada never developed much strength. They finally affiliated with a similar group under the name of New Mennonites. A movement very similar to the above arose in Bruce county a little later, in 1871, under the leadership of Solomon Eby. This agitation in turn also spread to Waterloo county as well as to Indiana. These various groups of Mennonites, all favoring prayermeetings and more aggressive evangelistic efforts, formed in 1874 what became known as the Reformed Mennonites, not to be confused with the present body

known by that name on this side of the line. A later amalgamation resulted in the United Mennonites, which still later merged with other groups into the present Mennonite Brethren in Christ.

The Martinites or "Woolwichers," as they are called locally, include a number of members of the Woolwich township church, who in the early seventies followed the lead of Jacob Wisler of Indiana in his stand for ultra-conservative ideas. In the early eighties these formally withdrew and now form an independent body, although they associate in religious work with the Wisler Mennonites of Indiana and Ohio.

Among the main body of Mennonites the work of John S. Coffman in the early nineties resulted in a decided religious awakening.

From these early settlements in Ontario there have developed a number of congregations of various branches approximately with the following membership at present,—Old Mennonites, 1,600; Mennonite Brethren in Christ, 1,800; Woolwichers, 500; Amish, 400.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The Westward Expansion of the Pennsylvania and Virginia Mennonites

During the first half of the nineteenth century numerous colonies of Mennonites from the old settlements beyond the Alleghanies in both Pennsylvania and Virginia were established within the States of the old Northwest Territory. In the very opening of the century, and before Ohio became a State, a flourishing colony had been established within the boundaries of that State. Among a group of colonists from Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, who had founded the present town of Lancaster in Fairfield county, just ten years after Marietta was settled, was a Mennonite named Martin Landis, who a few years later built a meeting house on his farm to be at the service of all denominations desiring to use it. Several years later a number of Mennonites came to the same region from Pennsylvania and Virginia. Among these was Henry Stemen, who settled near the present town of Bremen in 1803, and who became one of the pioneer Mennonite bishops of the State.

During the next fifty years a number of communities were organized by Easterners in various parts of the State, wherever cheap lands in good farming regions were to be found. Congregations were begun in Stark county in 1811; in Mahoning and Columbiana counties in 1815; and in Wayne and Medina counties in 1825 and 1834, respectively. Before the Civil war, small groups had located throughout Northwestern Ohio in Allen, Putnam, Hancock, Wood, Seneca, Williams, Ashland, Clark and Franklin counties. With the exception of small congregations at Elida, Bluffton, New Stark and Mt. Blanchard, these have practically all become extinct. During these years, too, a large

number of Europeans, both Mennonites and Amish, located in Ohio, as did also a number of Amish from Pennsylvania. In 1852 also Minister Ephraim Hunsberger of the Oberholtzer following from Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, organized a congregation at Wadsworth, in Medina county.

During this same period several small settlements had been made in Northwestern New York not far from the Niagara boundary. Natives from Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, had located in Niagara county in 1810, and in Erie county in 1824. In 1831 several German families from the Palatinate found their way here also. These communities never grew large, however, and are now nearly extinct.

The first Mennonites in Indiana were the Swiss, who came in 1838. The first native members of the church, however, came from Ohio under the leadership of John Smith from Medina county, who visited Elkhart county, Indiana, in 1843. Two years later he returned with others and began a community in Harrison township in the above county. Other Ohioans followed, and soon several congregations were formed in the county. In 1853 a group of Hollanders from Europe joined the present Salem congregation. There are at present eleven congregations in Indiana, and several in Michigan. Several church divisions occurred in Indiana during the early seventies, one led by Jacob Wisler, and the other by Daniel Brenneman, but these are discussed elsewhere in this book. There are a number of Wisler and Mennonite Brethren congregations now in the region of the early settlement.

Mennonites reached Illinois even earlier than Indiana, coming to that State only a few years later than the Amish. The first Mennonite family to locate in Illinois was that of Benjamin Kendig from Augusta county, Virginia, who left his home in the spring of 1833 in search of better opportunities for himself in the then far West. Loading all his worldly possessions on three wagons, he began his journey overland through Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois for his western home. In October of the same year, after a journey of eight hundred miles, which was made in seven weeks, he reached what was then known as Hol-

land's Grove in Tazewell county, where he began the first Mennonite community in Illinois near the Amish settlements begun two years before. Others followed from Virginia and Pennsylvania, but the community never grew large and at times was scarcely able to maintain itself as a religious organization. Between this and 1865 a number of small groups of Mennonites from the East located throughout the State, but none of them were large. The entire membership today of all the scattered communities is barely over five hundred. Among the congregations are those at Freeport, founded in the forties; Cullom, in Livingston county, established in 1858; Sterling, founded about the same time; and Morrison, in 1865. Several other congregations were organized which have since become extinct. In 1842 also was begun the German colony in St. Clair county. The large Amish settlements, throughout Central Illinois described elsewhere, do not belong to the group discussed in this chapter.

Throughout the States beyond the Mississippi, too, after the Civil war small scattered groups of Mennonites from the East were located in Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas, Idaho, Colorado, Oregon, Oklahoma, North Dakota, Texas and several other States. The entire membership, however, west of the Mississippi of such churches as migrated from the East, most of which belong to the Old Mennonite branch, exclusive of the Amish and later European immigrants, of course, is scarcely over one thousand.

Many of these pioneers in the far West had to endure all the usual hardships of frontier life. Many were homesteaders, and all were poor. In the early seventies the grasshopper plague, and later hot winds, drove many either back East or to other more favorable western localities. Others remained and have since become fairly prosperous.

A New Immigrant Tide

In the meantime, from about 1820 to 1860, a new wave of European immigration had set in from south Germany and Switzerland. The main background for this movement has been discussed in the chapter on Switzerland, but in addition to the

reasons there given—militarism, economic distress, and the political unrest of such revolutionary years as 1820, 1830 and 1848—may be added as an attracting force on this side of the Atlantic, the rapid expansion and economic development of the Middle West during this period. Directly after the war of 1812, statistics show that immigration from all classes from Middle and Western Europe rose rapidly, culminating especially in the high record of the year 1820. Enthusiastic letters to friends and relatives in Europe from those already here, and systematic advertising on the part of the ship companies in all the large centers of population greatly aided the immigration movement during those years.

In addition to all these causes which affected all classes more or less, we saw that the Mennonites were especially concerned about the military question. The Mennonites of South Germany and Switzerland had been impressed into service during the Napoleonic wars. At the same time they were trying to maintain their non-resistance. The Ibersheim Conference of 1803 threatened with excommunication all the young men who voluntarily joined the army. The fear lest they might not be able to maintain their peace principles was a strong factor in determining the immigration of so many Mennonites.

Among the first of the immigrants of the new tide were the Swiss from both the Jura and the Emmenthal settlements. As just suggested, the European side of this immigration is discussed in another chapter, and needs no mention here. The pioneer of the Swiss movement was Benedict Schraag from Basel, who located with his family in what is now Wayne county, Ohio, as early as 1817. As a result of enthusiastic letters written back to his friends, two years later four families from the Jura settlement—Peter Lehman, Isaac Sommer, Ulrich Lehman and David Kilchofer—began the large settlement known as the Sonnenberg congregation near Dalton. In the years immediately following many other families joined these early pioneers from both the communities in the Canton of Bern. Two large congregations were formed in Wayne county, and in 1833 Michael Neuenschwander, who had come to Wayne county from Switz-

erland ten years before, began another colony in what is now Allen county, along the banks of Riley creek, three miles northwest of what is now Bluffton, but then a howling wilderness. In the years immediately following numerous Swiss and several Alsatians located in this region, and the community has since developed into four large congregations, embracing an entire Mennonite population of nearly twenty-five hundred.

In the meantime, before 1838, Daniel Baumgartner and several others from Wayne county began another settlement in Adams county, Indiana. In a few years a small group of his fellow-believers had settled in the same region and had formed a church. It was not until the years from 1852 to 1854, however, that large numbers came from Switzerland and laid the foundation of the present large congregation at Berne. This community now embraces about two thousand souls. The congregation of nearly one thousand souls worships in the largest and finest Mennonite church house in America, and is perhaps the best organized and one of the most progressive found in any of the branches of the denomination.

From these pioneer Swiss settlements in Ohio and Indiana other small communities have been established in recent years in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Oregon, with individual settlers in many localities in the West. In recent years, too, several small communities have been founded in the western States by immigrants direct from Switzerland. Among these was a small group of fourteen families who located at Pulaski, Iowa, in 1873, under the leadership of Philip Roulet, who after two years in Butler county, Ohio, had come to Iowa in 1869. This group later moved to Missouri, however, and finally to Kansas. In 1883 another group of ten families came direct from the Canton of Bern to Whitewater, Kansas.

The Swiss immigrants of the earlier period, when they left their homes, packed their goods, wives and children in one-horse wagons and started out on the first five hundred mile lap of their long journey through France to Havre, where they would sell their horses but not their wagons, and wait for the ship on which they were to take passage. A voyage across the ocean

Mennonite Church, Berne, Indiana.

in the small sailing ships of those days was still somewhat of an uncertain and hazardous venture. One group of one hundred and seventy-five persons were given an entire vessel to themselves, a small cotton freighter, a three master, only one hundred and twenty-three feet long, twenty-two feet wide, with a carrying capacity of eight hundred tons. The captain, two steersmen, a cook, mate and seven sailors constituted the crew. In this frail bark they spent six weeks on the seas, a part of the time in heavy storms.

The ships usually landed at New York. Here our Swiss immigrants would again purchase a horse, which they would hitch to the wagon they had brought over with them, and begin another overland journey of some five hundred miles over the mountains and across the rivers of Pennsylvania to their chosen homes in the hardwood forests of Ohio, the entire journey from Switzerland to Ohio lasting usually in the early days about six months.

The first settlers usually being poor, located on uncleared government land which could still be purchased at $1.25 per acre. The first years were spent in making small clearings, and erecting the first log buildings. Farm products were cheap. The nearest market was one hundred miles away. Money was scarce. One Switzer in Wayne county at one time walked fifteen miles to the home of an Amishman for the price of a postage stamp to send a letter home. Clothing, from straw hats to wooden shoes, was all home grown and home made. For a long time, too, the Switzers retained their strange Swiss customs—hooks and eyes, and "Swietzer Dietch," which is still the common language of everyday conversation. Before 1854 baptism was always administered in private, never in public—a custom made necessary in the early days in Switzerland because of persecution.

In their church affiliations they remained for a long time independent from any of the American organized conferences. The Chippewa and a major part of the Sonnenberg congregation now rather affiliate with the Old Mennonites. The remaining communities in Ohio and Indiana joined the General Conference

group of churches in the early nineties. In 1878 all the Swiss congregations met at Sonnenberg for a conference. The bishops present at that time were Ulrich Sommer, Christian Sommer, and Christian B. Steiner from Wayne county; John Moser from Allen county; and Christian Sprunger and Christian B. Lehman from Berne, Indiana.

In the early thirties about one hundred Hessian Mennonites from Hesse-Darmstadt settled in Butler county, Ohio, near the Amish community there. A little later several families moved from here to Putnam county, Illinois, and in the early fifties a congregation was also established in McClean county, Illinois, near the Rock Creek Amish settlement. In all these places, after vain attempts to affiliate with the Amish in worship they organized separate congregations.

The Amish immigration from Alsace and Lorraine belongs to this same general period and had its source in the same general causes, but their story is told in another chapter.

A little later, during the forties and fifties, a number of individuals and several groups of Mennonites from Bavaria and the Palatinate had arrived. Individual Bavarians settled with the first Amish in the early thirties in their settlements in Illinois and Ohio. In the early forties small groups located near what is now Summerfield, St. Clair county, and near Galena, Jo Davis county, Illinois. Between 1844 and 1856 groups of Bavarians, and including practically the entire congregation at Eichstock, emigrated to America, most of them locating in Lee county, Iowa. Many of them later moved to Summerfield. An early congregation also was formed in Ashland county, Ohio, near Hayesville, and later a small congregation was also maintained at Cleveland. The Iowa congregations were located at West Point and Franklin Prairie. Some of the Ohio congregations have since become extinct, but the Summerfield and West Point congregations both became important charter members of the General Conference movement in the early sixties. Among typical names of this group of immigrants are Krehbiel, Pletscher, Baer, Leisy, Weber, Ellenberger, Eyman, Ruth, Vogt, Risser, Krämer, Schmidt, Hirschler, etc.

The small group of Dutch Mennonites who left Holland in 1853 to escape military service, and settled in Elkhart county, Indiana, has already been mentioned.

During and after the Civil war there was no further immigration in any appreciable numbers except perhaps individuals here and there who had friends and relatives here, until 1873, when the extensive Russian immigration began.

As to the number of Swiss and Germans who came from these regions to America during the period above mentioned it is difficult to say, since there are no statistics whatsoever. Judging, however, from the present descendants of all these immigrants the following guess is perhaps not very far wrong. Estimating that the population doubles itself every generation, a conservative estimate for German Mennonites, the entire number of the immigrant population was somewhere near three thousand, distributed as follows,—Amish, 1,500; Swiss, 1,200; Bavarians and Palatinates, 200; and Hessians, 150.

Church Divisions

The Mennonites of America as well as those of Europe have been unusually susceptible to church divisions. For this there are several reasons. In the first place the Mennonite faith has always fostered an extreme individualism. This spirit may make for strength of character, but at the expense of uniformity often. In the second place, the congregational form of church government and the lack of regular unifying conferences permitted scattered congregations to develop certain slight differences which later presented points of dispute when uniformity of action was desired for any particular purpose. Mennonites as a class were rural people, coming from the humble and simple walks of life, and not trained to subordinate non-essentials to the broader and more important interests of life. Several divisions, too, were caused by the pure stubbornness of certain self-willed individuals of a quarrelsome disposition.

At the time of the first American immigration there were two branches of the church—the Amish and the main body of Mennonites. The story of nineteenth century Amish divisions

The Origin of Mennonite Divisions in America.

has been told in another chapter. The immigrants among the nineteenth century Mennonites, too—Hessians, Bavarians, and Swiss—founded independent groups and for a time did not affiliate with any of the American groups, although later nearly all of them joined the General Conference movement. It remains here to speak of the divisions among the Pennsylvania Mennonites and their descendants.

The first division in the Pennsylvania church in 1775, that led by Christian Funk over the question of paying the war tax, has already been discussed.

The Reformed Mennonites

The second division occurred in Lancaster county in 1812, resulting in the organization of what is now known as the Reformed Mennonites. The founder of this sect was John Herr, never a Mennonite himself, but the son of Francis Herr, a Mennonite minister who had been expelled from the church on the alleged ground of irregularities arising out of a horse trade. Francis Herr, together with several of his friends, also ex-Mennonites, held religious meetings in his own house for some time after that. Upon his death his son John Herr took up his cause, and becoming "convicted of sin," attended the meetings of his father's associates. He finally had himself baptized by one of these associates, whom he in turn rebaptized. Several others were added to the group, and John Herr was soon elected bishop. Thus was begun the sect which soon assumed the name of Reformed Mennonites.

In numerous controversial pamphlets written soon after, the old church was charged with being dead, corrupt and worldly. What Herr and his associates meant by these terms soon became clear by the practises they adopted soon after. In the main the fundamental doctrines of the Mennonite church were retained, but in a few questions of practise they carried their principles to extreme lengths. They are still extremely exclusive in their religious affiliations. All those not of their faith are of the "world." Like the New Amish of Illinois they refuse to attend religious services of any sort if conducted by a minister of an-

other faith. The Ban and Avoidance are rigidly applied. They are severely plain in their dress, and discard all unnecessary adornment in their houses or on their persons as vain or sinful. They have grown slowly, and have not even held their own children. Many of the children do not join the church of their parents, and being taught that all other churches are of the devil, they frequently refuse to join any. Their stronghold is still in Lancaster county, but they have a few scattered congregations in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan and Ontario. Their influence has been small, although in Lancaster county there was often much bitter feeling for many years between the "old" and the "new" Mennonites. The entire membership today is scarcely over one thousand.

The Oberholtzer Schism

The next church controversy, commonly spoken of as the Oberholtzer division, began in Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, in 1847. The Mennonite church in this region at this time was still ultra-conservative on all questions pertaining to religious, as well as secular, customs and practises. Protesting against many of these severe customs, many of which have since been discarded by the old church, was a small group of liberals throughout the Franconia district led by a young minister by the name of John H. Oberholtzer. Oberholtzer was a young school teacher and minister, better educated and of a more progressive spirit than most of his older brethren of the "bench." His troubles began soon after he entered the ministry. He protested especially against the wearing of the so-called minister's "plain" coat which was collarless and of a prescribed cut, on the ground that the Mennonite creed did not specify the cut of a minister's coat. Practise, however, was almost unanimous for the conventional coat among the preachers. Oberholtzer after some dispute appeared in the coat and the matter seemed to be settled, but in 1847, when he asked the Conference to adopt a written constitution in order that conference proceedings might be conducted more systematically his request was refused, and a new quarrel arose.

As a result of these and other differences of opinion, which were mere surface indications of more fundamental differences, Oberholtzer and fifteen other ministers, who evidently were out of sympathy with the conservative view of the majority, withdrew from the Conference, and at the same time, too, were expelled in turn by the Conference. On October 28, 1847, these sixteen ministers, a number of them carrying their congregations with them, met in the old Skippack meeting house and organized a new conference.

That the liberal element was quite strong throughout Franconia was shown by the fact that a number of the congregations went over bodily to the new organization. In others the congregations were divided. The new party soon adopted a decidedly more liberal church policy than that in practice in the main church at the time. They declared in favor of open communion, and a liberal interpretation of the Ban. Inter-marriage with other denominations was permitted, and soon a salaried ministry was inaugurated. These new practises show that the differences between the two factions was deeper than a difference of opinion as to the cut of a coat or the adoption of an improved church constitution. These "Oberholtzer" churches later became charter members of the General Conference movement, with the exception of several that later withdrew to form another small independent group—the Evangelical Mennonites in 1853.

The Holdeman Faction

In 1858 John Holdeman, a layman in the Old Mennonite church of Wayne county, Ohio, ambitious to preach, but despairing of being called to the ministry through the uncertain chances of the lot, decided to preach without the conventional call. He pretended to be guided in his course of action by visions and dreams in one of which he claimed to find a call to preach. He therefore began to hold meetings in his own house, and secured a few followers including members of his own family. Like Herr before him, he took up his pen in defence of his own views and became a prolific writer. The old church he maintained had departed from the truth, and his own congregation was now the

true church of God, which had maintained the lineage of the saints from the days of the Apostles. His own small following which he now called the "Church of God in Christ" grew slowly in numbers. By 1865 his congregation consisted of but twenty members. It has since grown, however, especially in Kansas, Manitoba and other western states among the Russian Mennonites. The present membership is about fifteen hundred. They differ little from other Mennonites in their fundamental beliefs. Among the distinctive features introduced by Holdeman was objection to the "taking of usury," and the "laying on of hands" after baptism.

The Wisler Mennonites

The next division began in the Yellow Creek congregation in Elkhart county, Indiana. Among the pioneer settlers in this community was Bishop Jacob Wisler from Ohio, a man devoted to the principles of the church, but exceedingly conservative by nature, and opposed to the introduction of all new things, such as English preaching, four part singing, Sunday schools, evening meetings, protracted meetings, etc. In fact every slightest departure from the ways of the fathers was placed under the ban by Wisler and a considerable part of his congregation. A number of the more progressive members of the congregation, however, under the leadership of Daniel Brenneman, a fellow minister, demanded a more progressive policy. This Wisler opposed, and threatened with excommunication those who advocated the introduction of the new methods of church work. Finally the latter's arbitrary method of enforcing his views resulted in a church trial in 1870, in which Wisler was deprived of his office. He and those who believed as he did then organized a new congregation.

The same attempts to keep the church within narrow bounds were made by other ultra-conservative men in other sections of the country. All of these finding themselves weak in number, but akin in faith, finally affiliated themselves into one body. The first contingent to join Wisler's group was a band of conservatives in Medina county, Ohio. A little later, in 1886, several groups of

conservatives in Woolwich township, Waterloo county, Ontario opposing English preaching, Sunday schools, evening meetings, "falling" top-buggies, and other evidences of modernism among the Mennonites of that community, withdrew from the church and set up a separate organization. These "Woolwichers" as they are locally called, soon allied themselves with the Indiana Wislerites. A second group was led by Bishop Jonas Martin of the Weaverland congregation in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, who in 1893 because of a quarrel over a new pulpit recently installed into his church, withdrew from the church and posing as a conservative on other questions retained one-third of his former congregation. The third group consisted of a conservative Virginia congregation in Rockingham county of about one hundred members which allied itself with the Martinites of Pennsylvania.

These four original groups of Wislerites, Woolwichers, and Pennsylvania and Virginia Martinites now count up all told about six hundred members throughout Indiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Michigan and Ontario. They are all still ultra-conservative in dress, forms of worship, and social customs and are very slow to adopt new ideas. With the exception that they do not wear hooks and eyes nor the home made coats they are similar to the Old Order Amish in their general spirit and might well be called the "Old Order" Mennonites.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ branch is the result of a series of amalgamations of several small kindred groups of Mennonites, who at different times had seceded from the main body, largely for similar reasons.

The Mennonites during the first half of the last century in the main were never given over to much emotionalism. They took their religion seriously as a normal growth, often rather as a matter of fact. Children were taught in the ways of the church. In course of time most of them as a result of this teaching came to a realization of the need of a personal Savior in their lives. The worship consisted of formal services, and no attempts were

made to stir up the depths of individual religious feeling. Some fifty or sixty years ago, however, there appeared the conviction in different localities that true religion consisted in a more vital experience and a more conscious and definite conviction of sinfulness than seemed to prevail among the church members of the time, and especially that it demanded a more persistent cultivation of the religious emotions through prayer meetings and evangelistic efforts. Although these doctrines were not denied, the practises which resulted from them were contrary to the customs of the church at that time. The first to attempt to put these ideas into practice were a group of Mennonites in Lehigh county, Pennsylvania, led by William Gehman, a minister in one of the Oberholtzer churches. In 1857 because they advocated and practised prayer meetings contrary to the advice of the church authorities these were expelled. They thereupon formed a new organization and called themselves "Evangelical Mennonites." Among the doctrines stressed by the new body were the need of a more definite religious experience, more evangelism, and prayer meetings.

New Mennonites was the name applied to several groups of Mennonites in Waterloo county, Ontario, who in the fifties and early sixties had withdrawn from the old church because of opposition on the part of the latter to greater evangelistic efforts. Among the leaders of the new movement was Daniel Hoch, at one time interested with Oberholtzer in the unification plans which later developed into the General Conference.

The Reformed Mennonites arose from the same demand for prayer meetings in the Port Elgin congregation in Bruce county, Ontario led by Solomon Eby. In 1871, Eby and his congregation were expelled because of countenancing these meetings contrary to the rules of the church. The movement in the meantime had spread to Waterloo county, and also to Elkhart county, Indiana, where Daniel Brenneman led a similar movement for more aggressive evangelization work in the Yellow Creek congregation, for which he was expelled. In 1874, the Indiana and Canada groups formed an organization called the Reformed Mennonites.

The fourth group was the Brethren in Christ who as early

Members The General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ, held in New Carlisle, Ohio, Oct. 1916.

as 1838, had seceded for similar reasons from the River Brethren, who in turn had originally sprung from the Mennonite body during the preceding century.

These four small bodies all originally either directly or indirectly from the Mennonite church, with similar beliefs, largely by a series of amalgamations united to form the Mennonite Brethren in Christ organization.

The first union occurred in 1875 in Waterloo county, Ontario when the New Mennonites and the Reformed Mennonites consolidated under the name of United Mennonites. In 1879, the United Mennonites joined with the Evangelical Mennonites to form the Evangelical United Mennonites. The latter in turn in 1883 near Jamton, Ohio, united with the Brethren in Christ to form the present Mennonite Brethren in Christ.

This branch of the Mennonite denomination holds to practically all of the characteristic doctrines of the faith. As a result of the amalgamation of four different groups, however, all of which in course of time developed distinctive practises, the Mennonite Brethren now lay stress on a number of distinguishing doctrines, including immersion, open communion, sanctification as a definite work of grace, pre-millenialism, and feet-washing. They were among the first of the Mennonite bodies to include in their discipline a recommendation against the use of tobacco and strong drink. They insist upon a thorough conversion and a definite conviction of sin, as well as a decided assurance of salvation as a condition to membership. In their camp meetings they are inclined to give free play to their feelings, both of joy and agony of soul.

They are decidedly an evangelistic and missionary church. No other branch has reached out into non-Mennonite fields for its membership as widely as the Mennonite Brethren. One finds fewer of the characteristic old time Mennonite names among them than among other branches. This fact has brought with it special problems also. During the recent war the principle of non-resistance was much more difficult to maintain in Canada and Michigan where there was a strong membership of non-Mennonite ancestry than in Indiana where the opposite was true.

The Distribution of All Branches of Mennonites in the United States and Canada.

They are among the best organized of all the branches, being semi-episcopal in their organization. The highest administrative officials are presiding elders elected annually over districts or conferences. Ministers are licensed to preach upon satisfactory evidence that they have a definite call to that service. The Gospel Banner, edited by J. A. Huffman of Bluffton, Ohio, is the official organ. The church is now divided into seven conference districts. A general conference is held quadrennially. In 1916, the entire membership in the United States and Canada was seven thousand, five hundred and fifty.

The Old Mennonites

The list of divisions above described leaves the main trunk of the American Mennonites who in this treatise for convenience are called Old Mennonites. The leaders of this branch of the church object to the prefix "old," and insist that since they are the main body from which all the others departed they are entitled to the simple term "Mennonite" on the ground that they are the real descendants of the church founded by Menno Simons. Organically and numerically they are perhaps entitled to this distinction, but since a writer must adopt some method of distinguishing different groups either by name or number this larger body is here referred to as Old Mennonites. They speak of themselves officially, however, simply as Mennonites. To make the confusion worse this branch, together with the Amish-Mennonites are now affiliated in a General Conference, which is sometimes confused in the literature with the General Conference of Mennonites of North America. To distinguish between the two the latter is sometimes referred to when both are under consideration as General Conference A, while the former is General Conference B. These titles are merely for convenience and are not official.

The Old Mennonites are numerically by far the strongest division of the denomination. Their Year Book for 1918 gives a membership in the United States and Canada of 28,000, about one-third of which is massed together in one large settlement in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, the original home of the Palatin-

ate immigrants. They are still quite conservative on all matters of church policy, and the leaders lay strong emphasis on the doctrine of non-conformity to the world. Dress regulations are still quite rigid, especially for the women, who are all required to wear bonnets instead of hats.

This branch of the church has little religious affiliation with the other branches. It had no representatives at the Carlock All-Mennonite Convention in 1917. They are not even entirely united among themselves. The Lancaster County Conference has little organic connection with the churches farther west, and does not recognize the General Conference B referred to above. Ministers were formerly selected by lot, but in many places now this is no longer the prevailing method. Ministers are still for the most part untrained for their work, but the demand for an educated ministry is growing. None receive a salary. Both the missionary and educational interests of the church are making progress. Last year this branch of the church together with the Amish-Mennonites collected over one-half million dollars for missionary, educational and war reconstruction work. The Gospel Herald published at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, with a circulation of about 10,000, more than that of all other Mennonite periodicals combined, is the official organ of the Old Mennonite and the Amish-Mennonite branches.

DAVID GOERTZ

CHAPTER XVI.

THE IMMIGRATION FROM RUSSIA
1873-1880

The Russian background of the German-Russian Mennonite exodus to America in the seventies has been discussed elsewhere in this book, and only the American phase of the movement need be described here. After considering both South America and Africa, and sending an investigating commission to Siberia, North America was finally agreed upon by those who had decided to leave Russia as affording the best prospects for future homes. As early as 1872 and 1873 several individuals and small groups had come to the United States on prospecting tours, or to remain here. Among the first to arrive was young Bernhard Warkentin, later a prominent business man in Newton, Kansas, who came with several others in 1872. He was followed in 1873 by Cornelius Jansen, former Prussian consul at Berdiansk, who was given seven days to leave Russia never to return because of his connection with the emigration agitation, and David Goerz and his family later a prominent leader among his people. These three men soon took a leading part in everything that affected the welfare of their fellow-immigrants, and especially in directing them to their new homes on the western prairies.

In the same year also came a special delegation of twelve men, including one member from West Prussia, from such communities as were interested in emigrating to investigate suitable locations for prospective homes. This committee made a thorough inspection of the unsettled lands in Manitoba, Dakota, Minnesota, Kansas, Nebraska and Texas, where it still would be possible to secure cheap lands in areas large enough to form extensive, compact settlements; for they had been instructed by their Russian brethren to select regions where they might locate in

compact, and preferably closed communities. Returning to Russia the same fall, various members reported favorably on different regions.

In the meantime, throughout the Mennonite settlements prospective emigrants were selling their property often at a considerable sacrifice, preparatory to the long journey to the land of promise.

Although the great exodus from the two largest colonies did not begin until early in the summer of 1874, several families had arrived here in the fall of 1873 and had begun settlements in Kansas, Dakota and Minnesota. From the files of the Herald of Truth we learn that by January, 1874, there were ten or twelve families near Mountain Lake, Minnesota, and several more in Marion and McPherson counties, Kansas, which soon became one of the centers of large settlements. In the same issue it was announced that one thousand families were to start for America in April. By May the stream had begun. The issue of the Herald for May 5, announced the arrival of the fifty-eight Mennonites from Poland. By May 20, fifty more Poles (Volhynians) had arrived and located at Yankton, Dakota. The June issue reported that forty more had been brought by William Ewert, the Prussian member of the Committee of Twelve, to Summerfield, Illinois, from which place they soon found their way to new homes in Kansas. On July 8, seven more families stopped at Summerfield enroute to Kansas.

In the meantime the American Mennonites were busy organizing emergency committees to provide for the temporary needs of the new arrivals, and to help them to their new western homes. Some of the immigrants were rich, others well-to-do, but the large majority were poor and some extremely so. Many of these had to be provided with means to begin their life on the raw prairies and had to be temporarily supported.

In 1873, the Western District Conference largely through the influence of Rev. Christian Krehbiel of Summerfield had appointed a committee to collect money for such of the immigrants as might need help, and to direct them to their new settlements. About the same time John F. Funk of Elkhart, Indiana,

secured a similar organization among the Old Mennonites of the middle West. These two organizations were soon consolidated into the Mennonite Board of Guardians, with Christian Krehbiel as president; David Goerz, as secretary; John F. Funk, treasurer; and Bernhard Warkentin, agent. The Mennonites of Eastern Pennsylvania organized a special committee, as did also the Canadian church under the leadership of J. Y. Schantz of Berlin, Ontario. These organizations all did valuable service in providing for the needs and conveniences of the Russians while they were becoming settled. It is estimated that about $100,000 was collected and spent for this work, some of which was tendered as a loan and later repaid. In addition to this sum there were many individual loans, and in Manitoba the Canadian Government advanced a loan of $96,400 at six per cent. to prospective settlers upon security furnished by Ontario Mennonites, all of which in due time was paid back.

Railroad companies and State Immigration departments that had vast stretches of unoccupied lands still awaiting settlement took a lively interest in the coming of thousands of industrious European farmers. The Canadian Government passed a law offering each settler of twenty-one years of age and over a free homestead of one hundred and sixty acres, with an option on another three-quarters of a section at one dollar per acre in the Province of Manitoba. To the Mennonites full religious rights were granted with exclusive control over their schools, and entire military exemption. Some twenty-six townships of land were finally reserved for the exclusive use of the Mennonites.

In Kansas, the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Company, aided by the State Immigration Department, secured the passage of a similar law exempting the future colonists from the State militia service. This law was confirmed as late as 1915. Vast stretches of railroad land was offered at from $2.50 to $5.00 per acre. So active was the Santa Fe Company in directing the immigrants to Kansas that they sent their agent, C. B. Schmidt, to the Russian colonies for the purpose of presenting early the claims of the Sunflower State. The company even chartered a Red Star ocean steamer which was sent to the Black Sea for a

shipload of Mennonite household goods and farm implements. These goods were brought to New York, and thence by rail to Kansas all free of charge to the colonists. Influential men among the immigrants and members of the various committees were granted passes over the road. Groups of immigrants as they arrived at the Atlantic ports were carried west in special trains. The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company was equally active in Nebraska, but the Santa Fe secured the largest number of settlers for Kansas.

Aided and directed by these various organizations, the immigrants continued to find their way to the western settlements by the hundreds throughout the summer and autumn of 1874. The Herald reports that on July 18, eighty families had reached Burlington, Iowa, enroute to Nebraska. The next day, thirty arrived from the Crimea under the leadership of their elder, Wiebe, at Elkhart, Indiana, where they remained for the night in the Mennonite meeting house at that place, and the next day left—some for Kansas, and others for Yankton, Dakota. The total number of arrivals at the harbor of New York by July 8, was six hundred. At the same time too, many had arrived at Toronto, Canada, on their way to Manitoba. On July 20, three hundred and seventy are reported, and on July 30, two hundred and ninety more. The next day five hundred and four left for Manitoba. And thus the steady stream continued throughout all the summer and fall. An account given in November, 1874, shows that the Mennonite Board of Guardians reported from the Inman line the arrival of two hundred families. The Pennsylvania Aid Committee reported thirty-five families on the Hamburg line. The Canadian committee reported the arrival of two hundred and thirty by way of the Allan line for the year. The total estimate for all the settlements for the year was about twelve hundred families, with the prospect that one thousand families would follow in 1875. And the latter year was largely a repetition of the first. Whole vessels were chartered by the immigrants. In December, 1874, seven hundred had arrived in the "Fatherland," and four hundred in the "Abbotsford." On July 25, 1875, the "Netherlands" steamed up to the dock at New York with five hundred

The Bethel Deaconess Hospital, Newton, Kans.

and fifty Mennonites on board, and soon after the "Nevada" unloaded five hundred and seventy.

By the fall of 1875, the greatest rush was over, but small bands of Mennonites continued to come up to 1880 and several even later. By August, 1879, the Herald estimates that in Manitoba alone there were seven thousand three hundred and eighty-three Mennonites. The number in the United States—Kansas, Nebraska, Dakota and Minnesota was somewhat larger. The exact total number in America by 1880 is conjectural, since accurate statistics are not available. All those who are in the best position to know are agreed that more came to the United States than to Manitoba, and the present statistics on the Mennonite population on both sides of the line would bear out that impression. The difference, however, was not as great as many think. Wedel's estimate that only two hundred and thirty families settled in Manitoba as against nearly one thousand in the United States is certainly not correct. Indeed both his estimates of twelve hundred families, or ten thousand souls for all America during the emigration period are undoubtedly too low. His twelve hundred families evidently are meant to cover the end of the first year's immigration in 1874 and not the entire period up to 1880. Judging from the reports in the Herald of Truth at the time, and from the present number (about 67,000) almost equally divided between the United States and Canada, all descendants of the first settlers, about one generation ago, it would seem that the original number could not have been less than 15,000.

As already indicated these colonists came in various groups, separated in Russia by geographical or doctrinal differences. Those from the Old or Chortitz colony and the entire Bergthal church and a number from the Fuerstenthal, two daughter colonies of Chortitz, located in Manitoba. The Molotschna furnished the settlers in Kansas, Nebraska and other western states. The Volhynians went to Dakota and Kansas. The Huterites located in Dakota. Scattered members from all the Russian colonies were found throughout all of the United States settlements. Besides these geographical groups, which differed more or less from one another, there were the different church divi-

sions imported from Russia, to which were added several new ones. The most important of these were the "Bruedergemeinde." "Krimmer Brueder," "Kleine Gemeinde," and a small division locally known as the "Isaac Peters Gemeinde." Frequently groups and congregations, or small bands were led by faithful elders. Among these bishops were Jacob Buller of Hoffnungsau; Johann Wiebe of the Old colony in Manitoba; Gerhard Wiebe of the Bergthal congregation; Abraham Schellenberg of the Bruedergemeinde; Jacob Funk from the Crimea; Leonhard Suderman from Berdiansk; William Ewert with the Prussians; Andreas Schrag, leader of the Volhynians; Paul Tschetter of the Hutterites, and a number of others.

With these Russians came also a contingent of about one hundred families from West Prussia who settled near Beatrice, Nebraska and near Newton and Emmaus, Kansas. In 1873, also a number of the earlier settlers from the Palatinate, who had immigrated some years earlier to Iowa and Illinois, located near Halstead under the leadership of Christian Krehbiel.

Manitoba

The Manitoba settlements, composed of colonists from the Chortitz, Bergthal and Fuerstenthal communities and a group of Molotschna Kleingemeinder, form a group by themselves and deserve a separate description. As already stated, they were granted by the Canadian Government two reserves (later increased to three) of twenty-six townships, in the fertile Red River valley south of Winnipeg in Manitoba near the Dakota line.

Here in large closed communities they reproduced with practically no change the life to which they had been accustomed in Russia. They were all farmers, but grouped themselves into villages of from fifteen to thirty families, surrounded by their homesteads. The houses were built back on each side of a wide street which in course of time became lined with shade trees. Each village was in a way a self-sufficient economic and civil unit, with its school and shops. Each village had a magistrate (Schultz), and together with others in the colony was ruled

over by a Superintendent (Ober-schultz), who directed the general secular affairs of the entire group of villages composing the different congregations, while an elder or bishop assisted by a number of untrained and unpaid preachers, had charge of spiritual matters. This village life has been abandoned in a number of places, but among the Old colony people a number still exist.

In their religious customs and everyday practices most of the congregations were decidedly conservative. The "Old Coloniers" worshiped in church houses without paint. Inside the hard seats were without backs, which did not add to the comfort of listening to the long sermons of the time. Although a number of preachers were usually present at every service never more than one preached. The sermon was read from a book and the preacher seldom looked up at his audience nor indulged in any gestures, nor in the slightest degree departed from the practices of the fathers. In dress, he as well as the members, had to conform to the established conventionalities. White collars, shining watch chains and bearded faces were forbidden. To be in good standing and a model example the "Old Colonier" preacher was to appear in the pulpit in old style trousers tucked into high-topped boots. The dress of the women, of course, was equally conventional and severely plain.

The language of the pulpit was the High German, but that of ordinary conversation was some dialect of the "Platt Deutsch" imported from Prussia to Russia nearly a century before. Prayer was offered in silence and kneeling. Singing was from an old hymn-book also imported from their Prussian ancestral homes. The hymns were without notes and the melodies to which they were sung had under-gone wonderful transformations as they were passed on down through the generations. All sang in unison, the singing of different parts being forbidden.

These old customs and practices are still in vogue with practically no change in many of the secluded communities. The Rhineland congregation of Old Colonists of nearly two thousand members still forbids all participation in such outside civil or religious activities which may take place in the few towns

which have sprung up around the railway stations within the original settlements. The members are forbidden to participate in business or even to take up their dwelling in one of these towns, nor hold office of any sort outside of those directly concerned with their church life. Civil offices, modern clothing, modern houses, the English language, Sunday-schools, prayer meetings, higher schools—all are of the "world." They own neither telephones nor automobiles. The latter they call "Hell-Wagons." Not all the seven groups in Manitoba are quite so conservative as this, of course, but the most liberal even would be regarded as conservative by the large body of Mennonites on this side of the Canadian line. The seven different groups at present are the Bergthal, Reinland, Kleine Gemeinde, Sommerfeld, Holdemans, Bruderthal and Bruedergemeinde. Religious affiliation between these different groups there is practically none. The entire membership of all these groups is over seven thousand, totaling over seventeen thousand souls, with nearly fourteen thousand more in Saskatchewan and five hundred in Alberta, most of whom are the descendents of the original Manitoba settlers. A large majority of all these may still be classed among the conservatives.

In the development of the higher cultural life, the Manitobans as a whole have made little progress except in individual cases. Books are scarce and many schools are poor. In their early compact settlements the Provincial Government permitted them for many years to conduct their own schools with no outside supervision. These all began as private schools, and it was only gradually that a number of these were transformed into public schools which improved their character somewhat. These private schools were taught at first exclusively in German by teachers poorly equipped. The curriculum was meager. Finally English was introduced and both languages taught, bilingual teaching being permitted by the Manitoba Government until two years ago. During the last quarter century, H. H. Ewert, the pioneer educator among his people in Kansas, has performed a valuable service in raising the educational standards of the Mennonite schools in Manitoba. Against great discouragements and

Gretna Normal School, Manitoba.

with many sacrifices he has spent a good part of his life in behalf of the educational interests of his people. For twelve years, 1891 to 1903, he occupied the position of Government inspector of Mennonite schools, during which time he increased the public schools from a bare half dozen to over forty. He was also one of the leading spirits in the founding of the Gretna Normal school in 1891, for the training of teachers in both the private and public schools, of which there are now over one hundred throughout the various settlements. A local disagreement some years ago among some of the school people led to the founding of another school at Altona, which for several years was in charge of Jacob J. Balzer, who for over thirty years had done great service to the educational cause of his people at Mountain Lake, Minnesota. The Altona institution has since suspended operations, however. Under a liberal educational law permitting the use of both German and English, considerable progress has been made, and English has come to be used more and more. But the recent law abolishing bilingual teaching among the Mennonite public schools has had an unfortunate result in transforming a number of the public schools into private schools where German was still permitted. If the Government should forbid the use of German in all schools, as is feared, as well as in church and other papers it would undoubtedly work a temporary hardship and likely would not make for an immediate educational progress. Since the war is closed now, however, the antagonism to the German language will abate gradually and the elimination of the German in the schools may not be immediately adopted as a Governmental policy after all. It is inevitable, however, that ultimately the Government should prescribe and enforce the use of the English language and provide for a more rigid supervision of the whole educational system among the Mennonites. The relation of Mennonite education to the State Government in Saskatchewan is in the main similar to that in Manitoba. Here too, David Toews, head of the Rosthern school is doing an educational work among the Mennonites similar to that of H. H. Ewert. There are at present still about eighty private schools in Manitoba and thirty district schools, while in

Saskatchewan there are thirty private schools and sixty public schools. It is thus observed a majority of the Mennonites in Canada still oppose the public school. In fact the Old Colonists in both Provinces will not permit children to attend the public schools and will discipline the parents who send them. This opposition to public schools has already brought the Old Colonists into serious conflict with the Governmental authorities. A recent law in Saskatchewan prescribed the building of public schools and the use of the English language in the settlements that had hitherto been permitted to maintain their own private schools. Because they refused to send their children to the public schools a number have been punished with short jail sentences.

With poor schools, the maintenance of a foreign language, a compact settlement, an uneducated and unsupported ministry, a conservative and exclusive church policy, progress in the direction of a more vital and aggressive religious life will be slow. But in spite of all the peculiarities and formalities just described, the Manitoba Mennonites are known to be an honest, industrious, law-abiding and in their way a God-fearing people, and have played an important role in the economic development of Manitoba and the Canadian Northwest. In recent years, since the early nineties, many have swarmed from the original hive and have planted daughter colonies in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, where they have reproduced largely the life of the parent community, but where undoubtedly because of the smaller and more scattered settlements the old customs will be abolished more easily. The greatest hope of a reformed Manitoba lies in the breaking up of her closed communities and in keeping up social relations and religious affiliations with other more liberal Mennonite groups.

Since the above was written, public schools and the English language have been prescribed in the western provinces. In a number of districts among the extremely conservative Mennonites the government has found it difficult to enforce compulsory attendance in the public schools, and several of the Mennonites have served short jail sentences rather than to exchange their German parochial schools for the English public schools.

Western United States

In the United States the greatest number of Russian immigrants chose Kansas as a home. These came largely, as already indicated, from the Molotschna and other scattered Russian settlements, and were more progressive in the beginning than those who settled in Manitoba. They located in the heart of the State, along the Arkansas valley in the counties of Marion, McPherson, Butler, Harvey, Reno and Barton on lands bought from the Sante Fe at a low price on easy terms. Among the most prominent congregations in the state is the large Alexanderwohl congregation which emigrated bodily from Russia, and consisted of nearly six hundred persons at the time. To the smaller groups belonged the Poles, Volhynians and Prussians scattered through the central counties. Somewhat later other small non-Russian groups located near the original settlements. Among these was a small congregation of Galicians who came direct from Austria in 1885, and located near Arlington and near Butterfield, Minnesota. About the same time a small number of Swiss arrived from Bern, Switzerland, settling near Whitewater.

In Nebraska a colony of West Prussians located near Beatrice. In the early eighties a small group of Russians from Claas Epp's ill-fated Asiatic expedition also settled near here. Isaac Peters from the Pordenau congregation, and a number of his members arrived among the first Russian immigrants and established a colony in York county. A small group from the Bruedergemeinde also located in this county.

South Dakota received the large Huterite colony, and a number of Volhynians and others who located along the James river in the southeastern part of the State.

About one hundred families settled in southern Minnesota, where near Mountain Lake there are at present a number of flourishing congregations.

From all these original colonies new settlements have been made in nearly all of the newer western States. Oklahoma especially received many settlers during the eighties and nineties from Kansas, but there is hardly a State now west of the original

settlements that does not contain a number of prosperous Mannonite farming communities.

The first immigrants aroused considerable interest when they first arrived in the localities where they were to make their homes. In the fall of 1874 the Sante Fe Railroad Company was obliged to find temporary quarters in their shops at Topeka for several hundred families for several weeks enroute to their homes on the Kansas prairies. While here their strange clothes and manners were the source of interesting and sometimes unfavorable comment, but when they began to spend money liberally in the Topeka shops and stores for supplies and equipment to be used on farms still undeveloped their peculiarities were soon forgotten, and Governor Osborne even arranged a public reception for them at the State House.

Once on their lands, the Sante Fe erected large temporary sheds to quarter them while they were erecting their first crude long, one-story sod and frame houses. In Kansas the first settlers also tried to reproduce their Russian village life, but they soon gave it up as impractical and all soon followed the American custom of living in the open country in isolated farm houses. The years 1873 and 1874, it will be remembered, were the years of the panic and grasshoppers. The first settlers, especially the poor, were reduced to extreme poverty, and their Eastern brethren were obliged to send them relief. Those who came a little later, however, and who were obliged to buy farm equipment found the panic prices a decided advantage.

Like their countrymen in Manitoba the so-called Russian Mennonites in the United States were not Russians at all, but Germans who had come from Prussia three-quarters of a century before, and had retained practically all their Prussian culture including their "Platt-Deutsch" dialects. German is still the language of the pulpit, while the "Platt-Deutsch" dialect is used in everyday conversation. They brought with them, too, some of their Russian farm utensils including small Russian wagons, forks, rakes, and especially several large threshing stones, all of which, however, they had the good sense to discard after the first year or two. A number of them also thinking the conditions

favorable for the development of the silk industry planted mulberry trees and grew silkworms. The silk industry, however, never passed beyond the experimental stage.

In their church connections most of the main body of Russian Mennonites, called in Russia the "Alt kirchliche" to distinguish them from the "Bruedergemeinde" and other divisions described a little later, affiliated themselves with the General Conference of Mennonites rather than with any of the other American groups, because the former at the time were the only Mennonites in America actively carrying on missionary work, a cause in which the Russians also were interested. Another reason may have been the fact that the General Conference showed themselves more willing to cooperate with them on a basis of equality than any of the other groups. A number of congregations, however, have remained independent, or have formed small conferences among themselves. Among these is a congregation in Mountain Lake, Minnesota, which is in sympathy with the Old Mennonites, but is not a part of that conference. The Peters churches in Nebraska, the Wall congregation in Minnesota, at first independent have recently organized a small conference of their own. The Manitoba settlement, as we saw, was divided into two independent groups. In addition to the divisions imported from Russia a small number of the members of the various congregations, especially in Canada, have joined the Holdeman church.

As already indicated the Russian Mennonites in our own West have been more progressive than those across the border. Their early interest in good schools and colleges is mentioned in another chapter. It was largely for the purpose of promoting the education of their children, that the Kansas Conference was organized in 1877, and school matters received a good share of the attention of the Conference in its early sessions. At the same time, too, David Goerz established at Halstead, Kansas, the "Zur Heimat," a religious newspaper of great influence among the early Russian immigrants. They were greatly interested in missions from the beginning and soon heartily supported the industrial mission stations among the Indians, which were founded by

the General Conference. In material matters, too, they have succeeded and have been among the most prosperous and progressive farmers in the entire West. They have become more thoroughly Americanized also. Among them have been a number of men who have served their State and Nation in responsible positions. One of these is Senator Peter Jansen, son of Cornelius Jansen, already mentioned and a wealthy sheep-rancher, who has served his State in the State Senate and who was appointed by President McKinley, one of the United States commissioners to the Paris Exposition. For many years he has taken an active interest in the political affairs of his native State, Nebraska.

Among the groups which have had a separate religious history from the beginning in America, the most important is the

Bruedergemeinde

or the Mennonite Brethren Church, which had its origin in Russia in the sixties of the last century. Scattered bands and individuals were found in most of the first Russian Mennonite settlements in America, but they were so small that at first there was little organized church activity. With the coming, however, of Elder Abraham Schellenberg from the Molotschna in 1879, more aggressive work in behalf of their cause was begun. And soon such members as came direct from Russia together with such proselytes as were secured from the old church here formed aggressive congregations in all the settlements. By 1887, they had a membership of twelve hundred and sixty-six, in eighteen congregations. They place special emphasis upon a definite conversion experience, and baptize by immersion backward, and practise feet-washing in connection with the communion. They have much in common with the Baptists and at first lost a few of their members to that church. The Adventists also have made some inroads among them. They are perhaps more conservative than their own brethren in Russia, but follow an aggressive missionary and evangelistic policy. For several years beginning with 1898, their educational interests were served by a "German Department" in McPherson College, a Dunkard institution, which the conference helped to support. In 1908, however, they founded

Tabor College at Hillsboro, Kansas, which has since grown into a prosperous institution. The "Zionsbote" is the official publication of the church. They have increased their membership perhaps more rapidly than any other group. The membership in 1918 was six thousand and three hundred, with one hundred and sixty ministers, eight foreign missionaries, three city missionaries, and nine traveling evangelists. Closely related to the Bruedergemeinde are the

Krimmer Brueder

The Crimean Brethren, who were organized from a Crimean "Kleine Gemeinde" by Jacob Wiebe in 1869, came to America in 1874 and organized a separate church congregation. Although of the same faith as the Mennonite Brethren as to baptism and other religious practices and doctrines they inherited certain tendencies from their Kleine Gemeinde origin which together with their separate organization in America prevented them from affiliating entirely with the Mennonite Brethren. They are also sometimes spoken of as the "Wiebe Gemeinde," after their old elder who was still living several years ago in Kansas. Their entire membership at present is less than one thousand, the largest congregations being found in Kansas with others scattered throughout Oklahoma, Nebraska, Saskatchewan and several other western States. They control their own printing establishment in Chicago where they publish their paper the "Wahrheitsfreund." An interesting side-light into church practices is found in a series of conference resolutions passed in 1905. Marriage with those outside their own or the older Mennonite Brethren church was forbidden. Worldliness in superfluous dress, excessive buying of land, attendance at theatres and circuses was discouraged. Brethren owning guns were not to carry them. Hail insurance, life insurance, voting, and taking of oaths were all proven to be wrong by copious Scripture passages.

The Isaac Peters Churches

are a group of congregations in Nebraska and Minnesota which grew up around an original congregation which had immigrated

to Nebraska quite early from the Molotschna under the leadership of Elder Isaac Peters. Peters was an aggressive elder of the Pordenau congregation, who took a conservative stand on many questions and stood rather aloof from the other congregations before the emigration. He was exiled from Russia in 1873 because of his activities in the emigration agitation. In America his congregation stood for aggressive, but at the same time conserative church practices, and they have been inclined to affiliate with the Old Mennonites, although they have never been an organic part of that body. In the meantime Bishop Aaron Wall of one of the Mountain Lake, Minnesota, congregations, also held decidedly conservative views. A large part of the congregation being decidedly opposed to Sunday schools, missions and other lines of work favored by more progressive elements, organized a congregation of their own in 1889. At first inclined to affiliate with the Old Mennonites they later joined with the Peters congregation in Nebraska, and in 1910 formed a conference under the name "Defenseless Mennonite Brethren in Christ of North America." During the same year also, they founded their church paper "Der Evangelisations Bote." The Mennonite Year Book of 1918 gives these Peters and Wall congregations a membership of fourteen hundred and eight with four bishops and twenty-seven ministers, principally in Minnesota and Nebraska, but scattered groups also in Montana, Kansas, Idaho, Oregon, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Much of their earlier opposition to progressive church work has been abandoned, for they now support foreign missionaries in India and Africa and a city mission in Chicago.

Huterites

Although the Huterites have no organic connection in America with any of the Mennonite bodies, yet they have a common origin and have had a common history in Europe, and must therefore be included in any complete history of the Mennonites. They located first in Bonhomme county along the James River in South Dakota, but later in neighboring counties farther up the river. They are still communists and live in large Households

called "Bruderhofs," containing each from ten to thirty families.

The first Household established in Bonhomme county has since expanded into sixteen, mostly in South Dakota, but a few in North Dakota and Montana, with a total population of about two thousand. There are several scattered colonies, the most important of which, is the settlement in Wolfs Creek which covers over twelve thousand acres. A visitor to the colony in 1902 found at the time on the farms two thousand sheep, four hundred head of cattle, one hundred and fifty milk cows, seven hundred geese, seventy horses, three hundred swine, one thousand ducks, and sufficient up-to-date machinery and equipment to operate the establishment. All work in common, but each has his distinct work to do. Each department of work is in charge of an overseer, while a superintendent directs the work of the entire colony. The spiritual welfare of the community is in charge of a bishop. All eat in the common dining-room of the Household, which is also used for the final devotional and business meeting held each evening before retiring. Children are brought up in nurseries and are with their parents only at night. They have their own schools and still speak the German language. They take life rather easy, and require little money to carry on their individual business transactions, although as a community they have become wealthy. Their worship is simple. Peter Riedeman's Confession of Faith printed in Germany in 1565, and once in America at Berne, Indiana, in 1902, still furnishes the basis of their church doctrine. Their hymns are old, dating back to the sixteenth century and were never printed until 1916. Their clothes are quaint and old-fashioned, the men in several of the colonies still wearing hooks and eyes instead of buttons. They are opposed to higher education, missions and modern methods of church work. They are still strictly non-resistant. During the recent Liberty Bond campaigns, upon their refusal to buy bonds and contribute to the various war funds many of their sheep and cattle were forcibly taken and sold by the local county authorities for the sum of about $20,000, which was deposited in the banks with a view to use for the war fund. These officials were compelled to abandon these tactics, however, by the author-

ities higher up. The money was then to be returned, but the Huterites demanded their stock instead of the money. As a result of these experiences most of the colonies disposed of their holdings and bought large tracts of land in the Canadian Northwest under the impression that their young men might there enjoy the military exemption that had been granted to the Mennonites already there. Their coming, however, aroused bitter antagonism and certain business and military organizations and even ministers assemblies stirred up such a feeling against them throughout the Canadian Provinces that it was doubtful at the time of the close of the war whether they would have been able to secure exemption.*

The entire number of Russian Mennonites in the United States, in 1880, including all the divisions enumerated above, was somewhat larger than that of Manitoba. The living descendants count up now about thirty-five thousand. These together with about thirty-two thousand in Canada would bring up the entire Russian Mennonite population in America near sixty-seven thousand. Including the eighty-five thousand or more now still found in Russia would bring the total up to more than one hundred and fifty thousand descendants from the six or seven thousand Prussians who came to Russia a little over a century ago. When we remember that this was less than the number that remained in Prussia at the time, and that the present number of West Prussians is only about ten thousand, we can realize how influential the Mennonite church might be today, if in Germany and Holland during the last three hundred years the church could have succeeded as well in holding her young people, as did the Mennonites of Russia and their descendants in America.

* The Canadian Government has since forbidden Huterites and Mennonites to settle in Canada.

JOHN H. OBERHOLZER

CHAPTER XVII

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF MENNONITES OF NORTH AMERICA

The General Conference originally was not a separate branch of the denomination, but was a unification movement aiming at a union of all Mennonites in America. As a unification movement it had its source in three distinct local centers—in Pennsylvania, Ontario, and Iowa.

J. H. Oberholtzer and his followers, as already noted, after their expulsion from the Franconia Conference in 1847, immediately organized themselves into a new religious body. Oberholtzer began a vigorous campaign for the spread of his cause. For the advancement of the religious interests of the congregations which had cast their lot with his, he founded in his home town, Milford Square, the first Mennonite church paper in America called "Religioeser Botschafter." This paper he published at his own expense for the good of the cause until 1856, when it was taken over by an association called the Mennonite Printing Union, and the name of the paper was changed to "Das Christliche Volksblat." This paper Oberholtzer used to good advantage in advocating a closer union among a number of isolated Mennonite communities.

Although Oberholtzer was active in promoting the interests of the new movement, he had not entirely abandoned the hope of effecting a reconciliation with the old church. He sincerely desired a union, and as late as 1860 he suggested in a pamphlet called "Verantwortung und Erlaeuterung" the terms upon which the two groups of churches might come together. These terms, however, were rejected by the old church, and so no reconciliation was possible. At the same time, too, he was advocating through his church paper a union of all the Mennonite congregations of America.

In the meantime a liberal movement, similar in many respects to the one in Franconia had been making headway among a few of the scattered churches near Niagara Falls, in Lincoln county, Ontario. This movement was one in behalf of more aggressive church work, especially of greater evangelistic efforts, and the leading spirit was a minister by the name of Daniel Hoch. In 1853, Hoch was appointed at a meeting of this group of churches as a visiting minister to various scattered congregations in the region. He also had come into contact evidently with a small congregation at Wadsworth, Ohio, composed of a few families, who had recently come there from Pennsylvania under the leadership of Reverend Ephraim Hunsberger, for in 1855 these two groups organized themselves into the Conference Council of the Mennonite Communities of Canada-West and Ohio. The purpose of the organization seems to have been to promote greater evangelistic and missionary zeal among the churches.

Oberholtzer had taken a deep interest in the Canadian movement from the very beginning, for here might be an opportunity perhaps of enlarging the circle of congregations that favored a more liberal church policy, and the beginning of the realization of a dream which he already began to cherish, namely the unification of all the Mennonite churches of America. Consequently in the Volksblatt in 1856 he advocated the union of the Canada-Ohio conference with his own Pennsylvania conference in the interests of the mission cause, and suggested a general council of the two conferences. This plan was favorably received by the Canada churches, and resolutions were passed by the Conference in its session of 1857 urging that steps be taken in this direction, but no further results followed at this time.

While this subject was being agitated in the East, a similar movement had begun in the West. In Lee county, Iowa, there were two small congregations composed largely of Bavarian and Palatinate immigrants who had come to the State some few years before. They were located near the Amish settlement, which had been made some time earlier. But being more recently from Europe than the Amish, and differing from them in customs and practises they never worked in harmony with them. Conse-

quently these two congregations found themselves somewhat isolated from the other Iowa churches. Feeling the need of united effort especially in evangelistic work among such members of the church as had settled some distance from the main body, a joint meeting of the West Point and the Zion congregations was brought about at West Point in 1859, largely through the influence of Daniel Krehbiel, who continued for the rest of his days a most enthusiastic advocate of the unification cause. Another leader of the union movement for the Iowa churches was Christian Showalter, also a South German immigrant, and at this time a teacher in the parochial school at the Zion congregation. According to the resolutions passed at this meeting its purpose was to "devise ways on the one hand for the centralization of the Mennonite churches, but chiefly on the other for supplying isolated families with the Gospel blessings." The ideal of the union of all Mennonite churches seems to have captured the imagination of the leaders of the Lee county congregations also. Near the close of the meeting after an urgent plea by Daniel Krehbiel, it was decided to extend a general invitation to other Mennonite churches to meet with them in another conference at West Point the following year. The report of the initial meeting together with the invitation for the coming year were published in the Pennsylvania paper, the "Christliche Volksblatt."

Oberholtzer naturally was also interested in the Iowa movement. During the year he repeatedly urged through the columns of his paper that both the Pennsylvania and the Canada congregations send representatives to the meeting in Lee county. Neither, however, seemed enthusiastic in responding to the invitation, and that for several reasons. In the first place Iowa at that time was on the frontier line of American civilization, and why should the eastern churches go so far west to attend a meeting the purpose of which was to form a union of congregations almost all of which were in the East. Secondly the Iowans were recent European immigrants in whom the Easterners, whose ancestors had been in this country for the better part of two centuries, felt little personal interest. Neither of the eastern conferences appointed delegates to the western meeting. Hoch and

Oberholtzer appeared to be the only individuals in the least interested in the enterprise, and it seemed extremely doubtful whether even they would be able to attend because of financial considerations. But finally at the last moment through the generosity of a friend it was made possible for Oberholtzer and one companion to be present. These two men were the only representatives at the meeting from the churches outside of the Iowa congregations.

The conference, if indeed it may be called such, was held May 28-29, 1860, near West Point, and was composed of the two congregations already named, another minister from a near-by settlement and the two representatives from Pennsylvania. Oberholtzer was chosen chairman, and Christian Showalter of the neighboring congregation, secretary. Although unpretentious and local in character, this meeting was not deterred by that fact from discussing a lofty and ambitious ideal, namely the unification of all the Mennonites of America under one working organization. Deploring the fact that there was so much factionalism among the Mennonites, and that the denomination "has never since its existence in America constituted an ecclesiastical organization," and further that because of this factionalism there is "a corresponding decline in spiritual life," the assembly drew up a set of resolutions which it was hoped would serve as a common platform upon which all might unite for the extension of the mission and other interests of the church. These resolutions are as follows:

1. That all branches of the Mennonite denomination in North America regardless of minor differences, should extend to each other the hand of fellowship.

2. That fraternal relations shall be severed only when a person or church abandons the fundamental doctrines of the denomination; namely those concerning baptism, the oath, etc., as indeed all the principles of the faith which we with Menno base solely upon the Gospel as received from Jesus Christ and His apostles.

3. That no brother shall be found guilty of heresy unless his error can be established on unequivocal Scripture evidence.

4. That the General Conference shall consider no excom-

munication as Scripturally valid unless a real transgression or neglect conflicting with the demands of Scripture exists.

5. That every church or district shall be entitled to continue without molestation or hindrance and amenable only to their own conscience any rules or regulations they may have adopted for their own government; provided they do not conflict with the tenets of our general confession.

6. That if a member of a church, because of existing customs or ordinances in his church, shall desire to sever his connection and unite with some other church of the General Conference such action shall not be interfered with.

As just indicated, the motive for this united action was to provide for more effective evangelistic efforts, but two other subjects were also discussed during the meeting—the establishing of a publishing house and an institution for theological training. Both of these measures had been advocated for several years by such men as Oberholtzer, Hoch and Daniel Krehbiel, and these men were undoubtedly responsible for introducing them into the discussions at this time. After a two days' session, the assembly adjourned, but not before it was decided to meet again the following year at Wadsworth, Ohio.

Thus was launched the General Conference of the Mennonites of North America. The aim of the movement was an ambitious but worthy one. Just how seriously the leaders of the cause at this time entertained the thought of a union of all the Mennonites it is not easy to say. It may be safely inferred, however, that none were so sanguine as to expect the fulfillment of the work in their own day, for such a task would have been an impossible one. The gap between the opposite extremes of Mennonite custom and practise of that time was too wide to be bridged over easily. But a union of some of the more liberal of the older American Mennonite churches and a number of the recent immigrant congregations was entirely feasible, and the leaders of the movement undoubtedly hardly hoped to see more than that much of their plan accomplished in their own day. The dozen or so of the Pennsylvania congregations of course would likely come into the union, as would also a number of the South

German churches in Summerfield, Illinois, and Hayesville and Cleveland, Ohio, all of whom were bound to the Lee county people by ties of kinship. The Wadsworth congregation of liberal Pennsylvanians would also be likely to join the movement. And so would the two or three Canadian congregations under the influence of Hoch. But beyond these scattered congregations there was not a strong probability that many others could be secured for the cause in the immediate future. And yet this time was more opportune perhaps than any later period would have been for attempting such a program. For none of the Alsatian Amish churches nor the older Mennonite churches in Ohio, Illinois and Iowa had as yet formed themselves into Conferences. Each congregation was independent of all others and some had already departed somewhat from the older traditions and customs. A few of these in more recent years have affiliated themselves with the movement, but after the organization of conferences of their own and especially after they came under the influence of the conservative elements of the East the probability of an affiliation with the General Conference had passed. The growth of the movement has since been confined almost entirely to isolated congregations of later Russian and Swiss Mennonites.

The General Conference, however, was hardly a fact as yet in 1860. Neither the Canada-Ohio Council, nor the few other independent congregations which it was hoped might be brought into line had accepted the first invitation. It remained to be seen what action these would take at the next meeting at Wadsworth.

This session, the second to be held, met at Wadsworth, Medina county, Ohio, May 20, 1861, in the very days of the opening of the Civil war. It was soon found that the unification movement was taking root, for now eight congregations were represented, including in addition to those present the year before those at Waterloo, Ontario, Summerfield, Illinois, and several of the Oberholtzer following in Pennsylvania. Daniel Hoch of Canada, and Daniel Hege of Summerfield were elected chairman and secretary respectively. Two new subjects were discussed at this meeting. A new article discouraging secret societies was added to the platform adopted the year before, and the first steps

General Conference Delegates and Jubilee Guests, Beatrice, Nebr., 1909.

were taken toward the establishing of a theological school. Daniel Hege, a well educated minister of the Summerfield congregation, was appointed as home evangelist and was authorized to visit all the churches in the interest of missions and the new school. After signing a formal unification agreement, the assembly adjourned to meet again, the time and place to be decided by the chairman and secretary. The conference was now a fact. After this, sessions were held regularly, at first biennially, but later triennially.

The third meeting was held in Summerfield in 1863. The chief discussion at this time concerned the proposed school, and further steps were taken toward its organization. Triennial meetings were agreed upon and also a method of representation according to the size of the affiliated congregation. From this time on the Conference maintained a steady growth. Nearly every succeeding meeting showed a gain in the number of affiliating congregations. At first of course the new additions came from the Pennsylvania Oberholtzer churches. But in 1875 the Swiss congregation at Berne, Indiana, was represented for the first time by S. F. Sprunger. And the following year at a special session the first Russian church, the Alexanderwohl congregation, was represented by Henry Richert and David Goerz. Twenty congregations were present by delegates at this session. After this most of the additions came from the recent Russian immigrant churches whose sympathies had been won to the leaders of the General Conference movement both because of the help they had received in settling in their new home and also because of their interest in the cause of missions, an interest which was shared by a number of the Russian churches. The meeting of 1893 was held at Bluffton, Ohio. For the first time the Swiss churches at Bluffton and Dalton, Ohio, and the Amish congregations at Trenton, Ohio, and Noble, Iowa, sent delegates. Fifty churches were represented at this meeting, eighteen coming from Kansas. Each succeeding session now recorded some new additions either from the Russians or some other isolated congregations which for various reasons had not become identified with any of the other special Mennonite conferences which were being formed in the meantime. In the early nineties there seemed a fair pos-

sibility of winning a number of the congregations of the present Central Illinois Conference to the movement, but with the founding in 1899 of a separate organization of these churches, that source of additions was closed for the time. The last session of the General Conference was held at Reedley, California, in 1917. Delegates from one hundred and twelve congregations were present representing a membership of 16,057.

Among the men, in addition to those already mentioned, who played an important part in the early formative period of the movement must be mentioned A. B. Shelly of Pennsylvania, president of the Conference continously from 1872 to 1896, and interested in all its various lines of work; Christian Krehbiel, of Summerfield, Illinois, but later from Halstead, Kansas, a South German immigrant, interested in the Russian immigration, and one of the leaders in the Indian mission cause; David Goerz, a Russian immigrant, and one of the leaders in bringing the Russians into the General Conference; Henry Richert, from the Alexanderwohl congregation, also a leader among the Russians; J. C. Krehbiel, chairman of the first meeting in 1859 at West Point, and a member of many important committees later; S. F. Sprunger of Berne, Indiana; Ben Eicher, leader of the Amish churches in Henry county, Iowa; Daniel Hege, the first home evangelist and collector of funds for the Wadsworth school; C. J. van der Smissen, theological professor at Wadsworth, and later secretary of the Mission Board; J. S. Moyer of Pennsylvania; and John S. Hirschler of Kansas. A number of younger men still living and active have done much for the General Conference in recent years, but it is left for some future historian to estimate the value of their contributions.

The two questions that occupied much of the time and thought of the Conference during the first twenty years of the history of the movement were education and missions. The school at Wadsworth held the center of interest from 1863, when the first committee was appointed until 1878, when it was forced to close its doors. It took six years after Daniel Hege began to collect funds in 1862, before the school was opened. The institution which was known as "The Christian Educational Institu-

tion of the Mennonite Denomination" was located at Wadsworth, Ohio, which was thought to be the most centrally located between the East and the West. It opened its doors on January 2, 1868, with Christian Showalter, of Iowa, as principal, one other teacher, and twenty-four students. Its purpose was primarily to train young men for Christian work, although secular subjects were also taught. During the same year C. J. van der Smissen from Friedrichstadt, Germany was called to the chair of theology with the assurance that the position was to last the rest of his natural life. The school never prospered. The attendance hardly ever went beyond that of the opening day. It began with a deficit in the building fund, and poor financing handicapped its work throughout its entire career. Although there were only three teachers, expenses could hardly be met. Besides financial difficulties there were quarrels within the faculty. Showalter and van der Smissen did not agree upon matters of policy, and the former finally resigned, leaving to the latter the entire management of the educational policy of the institution. Finally the churches of the West and those of Pennsylvania disagreed as to certain questions of management, with the result that the school had to close with a heavy debt, a theological professor hired for life, and but few students, in 1878, just ten years after the first students had entered its doors for instruction.

In the meantime as soon as the school had been successfully launched the mission question received a good share of the attention of the Conference sessions, as did also the publication interests, but these being discussed elsewhere in this book need no repetition here. During recent sessions considerable disagreement arose among different factions in the Conference as to the desirability of remaining affiliated with the Federal Council of Churches to which the General Conference had been admitted some time ago. At the 1917 session it was agreed by a majority vote of the delegates present to discontinue the membership. At the same session, too, the question of secret societies was discussed and a committee appointed to formulate a policy of action with reference to such congregations as permit members of lodges in their churches.

It will be observed that the General Conference of Mennonites is not a separate division of the church, or at least that is not its aim. It is rather a conference whose aim is the ultimate union of all branches of the denomination, any or all of which are eligible to membership in the Conference if they so desire. This it hopes to accomplish along the lines laid down in 1860. Few limitations other than such fundamental principles as have always been regarded as essential to Mennonitism, including as just noted anti-secrecy, are placed upon the congregations composing it. Each governs itself and determines its own policy. But all unite in carrying out certain lines of Christian activity, such as missions, publication work and evangelism. The purpose of the movement is best set forth by H. P. Krehbiel, its chief historian. He says:

"The churches constituting the General Conference have by their union not become something different from what they were before. Each church remains just what it was and retains all peculiarities she had if she chooses. Each church retains her individuality as well as her independence. It is not a separate class or division of Mennonites which may be distinguished from others by special doctrines or customs. It is impossible to class the Conference as such a division because her membership list contains churches which differ very much in customs and special views, and which to this day retain these differences precisely as they did previously to uniting with the Conference. The General Conference is therefore in no sense a branch or division of the denomination."

After all, however, the members of the organization necessarily have certain common interests and religious opinions which differentiate them from other Mennonite groups, and which give them many of the characteristics of a separate branch of the church. While they permit a great diversity of practise and custom, they agree in such fundamental doctrines as rejection of infant baptism, non-resistance, opposition to the oath, anti-secrecy and other characteristic Mennonite doctrines. In 1902 the Conference authorized the translation and publishing of the Cornelis

General Conference-Mennonite Conference, July 5 6, 1906, Eigenheim, Sask., Canada.

Ris Confession, one of the most liberal of existing Mennonite Confessions.

Unlike the Old Mennonites and the Amish and several of the other more conservative branches, none of the General Conference congregations demand of their members any specific mode of dress. Most of the congregations have either discarded or have never practised feetwashing as a church ordinance with the exception of a number of the conservative Russian churches, among whom the practise is still in vogue. Most of the General Conference churches maintain a salaried and trained ministry except a number of the Russian congregations, where the old type of untrained, unsalaried preacher is still the rule.

The movement for union along the lines laid down by the General Conference has not made much progress among the more conservative elements of the older American Mennonites. Old customs and traditions are too strongly entrenched among these and they are now too well organized to be greatly influenced by any liberal and progressive movement outside their own body. Certain influences, however, in recent years have made for a measure of unification sentiment. During the recent war all branches of the denomination, including even the Old Order Amish, have worked together at different times in the interests of their common non-resistant doctrine. Significant were the two all-Mennonite conventions held at Berne, Indiana, in 1913, and at Carlock, Illinois, in 1916, at which unofficial representatives of the various branches of the denomination came together to discuss their common problems. Auspicious, too, is the co-operative control of Bluffton College by a Board of Trustees representing five different branches of the church. As men work together in a common cause and learn to know each other better, they become less suspicious of each other and find that their differences disappear. Growth of the General Conference by the addition of new isolated congregations will perhaps soon reach its limit. May the next step, perhaps, not be a federation of conferences already existing in the interests of such common enterprises as missions, education and other essential undertakings?

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHURCH AND THE STATE
Oath and War

On no other points of their faith have the Mennonites been so often misunderstood as on their attitude toward the oath and warfare. Their objection to the oath and refusal to bear arms have both been repeatedly misconstrued, both in Europe and America, as indicating a spirit of disloyalty to their adopted country. In Pennsylvania the Mennonites were welcomed by the Quakers, who held similar views on these questions, but the law passed by the English Parliament permitting the affirmation instead of the oath applied to Quakers only. Mennonites and others who had similar scruples against the taking of the oath in becoming naturalized were compelled to petition for the privilege. The Mennonites, in 1717, and the Amish, in 1742, were granted the rights of affirmation.

In Maryland the constitution of 1776 specifically mentions "Quakers, Tunkers, and Menonists," to whom the right of affirmation is guaranteed wherever an oath would otherwise be required. Today this right is guaranteed both by the Federal Constitution and in practically every State, and frequently even those not belonging to a non-resistant faith avail themselves of the privilege.

Exemption from military service was not always so easily secured, but conscientious scruples were always given careful consideration by those in authority. The only Colonies in which Mennonites were located at the time of the Revolutionary War were Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. In each of these Mennonites were exempted from military musters, which seemed to be generally provided for by the local county authorities upon

the payment of a sum of money usually called a fine. In Virginia, however, in 1777, where provisions were made for conscription, Mennonites in case they should be drafted for service were to be discharged upon furnishing a substitute, who was to be paid by a levy upon the membership of the entire church.

After the war, in 1790, the constitution of Pennsylvania declared that "those who conscientiously scruple to bear arms shall not be compelled to bear arms, but shall pay an equivalent." A law of Maryland, in 1793, provides that "Quakers, Mennonites, and Tunkers and all others who are conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms, and who refuse to do military duty shall pay a sum of three dollars annually. The Virginia code of laws in force, in 1860, provided that all privates refusing to attend military musters must pay a fine of seventy-five cents, which of course the Mennonites freely paid. The wars of 1812 and of 1848, as well as the war of 1898, were all fought by volunteers, and consequently there was no occasion to test the faith of the non-resistant churches.

In the Civil War both the North and the South were finally forced to resort to conscription. The Federal act of February 24, 1864, exempted those having conscientious scruples, permitting them to accept hospital service when drafted, or to pay $300 exemption money. No person, however, was to be entitled to the benefit of this clause unless his declaration of conscientious scruples "shall be supported by satisfactory evidence that his deportment had been uniformly consistent with such declaration." This exemption clause, it will be observed, differed from the provision permitting substitutes, by which one could secure exemption by furnishing a substitute at such price, of course, as the substitute demanded. Under this law Mennonites were not disturbed except in a few communities, among others Fulton county, Ohio, where a mob, objecting to any discrimination in favor of conscientious scruples, attacked a number of exempted Mennonites.

In the South, Virginia resorted to universal service almost from the beginning, and no exceptions were made in behalf of religious scruples. A number of Mennonites from Rockingham

county were called into the army in 1861. These refused to fight. Others were captured attempting to escape through the lines into the North. These were imprisoned in Libby Prison for a time and tried, but because of their religious convictions were permitted to go home. Early in 1862 Virginia passed a law exempting members of a church forbidding the bearing of arms upon the payment of $500, and the further sum of two per cent. of the assessed valuation of all taxable property. In case of the refusal of such members to comply with this law or the inability to do so, they were to be taken into some form of non-combatant service.

This law, however, was soon superseded in the same year by the general conscription act of the Confederate Government, which also provided for the exemption of members of the "Society of Friends, Association of Dunkards, Nazarenes and Menonists" upon the payment of $500. All these religious denominations, being opposed to both slavery and war, were bitterly denounced in their communities by those not of their faith, but they were not compelled to take up arms by the Government until the summer of 1864, when, because of the great need of men, the Confederate Congress repealed all exemptions. A number of the young men escaped through the lines into western Virginia and into the North. The Mennonite communities, being located in the heart of the Shenandoah valley, also suffered heavily from the numerous raids made through the valley.

The Canadian Government has been more considerate of conscientious scruples even than the United States. As early as 1808, Ontario passed a law exempting "Quakers, Menonists and Tunkers" from militia service, upon an annual payment of twenty shillings in time of peace, and five pounds when the militia should be called out for defence. Refusal to comply with this law was to be punished by a jail sentence of not more than a month. In 1839, after the union of the Upper and Lower Provinces, the fine was raised to ten pounds instead of five, and later several minor changes were made in the law, but its general purport remained the same. In 1868, after the formation of the present Dominion of Canada, an act was passed exempting Qua-

kers, Mennonites, Dunkards and all members of other religious denominations opposed to war from militia service under such conditions as the Governor-in-Council might prescribe. This law was still in force at the time the recent war broke out, although perhaps not generally known. The Conscription Act of 1917 exempted from combatant service all religious bodies opposed to war in principle. The clause in this act which exempts only from combatant service, it will be observed, differs from the act of 1868, which exempts from all service. The act of 1868 was the basis on which the Canadian Government promised the Russian Mennonites who settled in Manitoba in 1873 complete military exemption as a condition of their migration to that Province. The State of Kansas also guaranteed exemption from military musters to all those conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, in behalf of the Russian Mennonites in 1873. This guarantee was confirmed as late as 1915, but it is of no value, since it is subservient to the Federal law on the subject. In fact, nearly half of the States in the Union exempt by constitutional provisions from militia service those conscientiously opposed to such service.

When the recent Canadian Conscription act was passed the Government, upon being reminded of this early law and promise by a committee of Mennonites from the western Provinces, graciously agreed to abide by the promises made to the early Russian settlers in 1873, and granted entire exemption to all the descendants, both baptized and unbaptized, of the original Russians. Whether this liberal provision would apply also to the Mennonites of Ontario, who were not a party to the agreement of 1873, but were included under the act of 1868, at first seemed doubtful. A number of Ontario young Mennonites were taken into the army at first, and upon refusing to serve were court-martialed and given a two-year prison sentence, but which was later changed to farm furloughs. As just indicated, the laws of 1868 and 1917 were not quite similar, but the Canadian Government finally decided to abide by the more liberal provisions of 1868 and the promises of 1873, and thus granted the Ontario Mennonites the same gracious consideration as that given to

members of the church in Manitoba and the western Provinces.

The Canadian churches also took a stand in the beginning of the war against contributing to war loans. But upon the promise of the Government at the time of the last loan that Mennonite money was to be used only for relief purposes and not for direct war purposes, the Russian churches all endorsed the loans, and it is estimated that they raised about a half million dollars in the western Provinces. Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. campaigns they supported heartily. In the last drive each farmer was expected to contribute fifty dollars for each quarter section of land, and business and professional men accordingly. It is estimated that some $200,000 was raised for this work, an average of over six dollars for every man, woman and child among them.

Few of the young men enlisted in the service and such as did were usually considered as having forfeited their membership. The price paid by the Mennonites, however, for their exemptions was disfranchisement for the period of the war, The Dominion Government was considerate of Mennonite scruples throughout the war, but in some localities, especially in the extreme West, considerable bitterness began to develop near the close over a new problem. The question as to whether the exemption applied to Mennonites who should enter Canada after the passing of the Conscription act was precipitated by the migration of a number of Mennonites from the States, especially the Huterites from South Dakota, who bought large tracts of land in Saskatchewan and Alberta for the purpose of escaping service and intimidation in the United States. Appeals were made to the Government by numerous local organizations not only to prevent the settlement, but even to repeal the original exemption clause. The Government took no formal action on the matter, but it seemed the opinion of many of those in authority that such immigrants were not entitled to the exemption, and had the war continued much longer, measures would perhaps have been taken to restrict the privileges of the new arrivals. As it was much bitter feeling was developing throughout the Northwest, especially against the Huterites, who claimed to be Mennonites.

Administration Building.

Ropp Hall.

Whether the same objection to their arrival will continue now that the war is over remains to be seen, but likely not. The latter, too, are not sure that they made a wise choice in selling their fine homes in South Dakota at such a sacrifice, and many are wishing themselves back again.

Within the United States this war has tried the faith of the Mennonites as no other American war ever did. The struggle was on such an enormous scale, and has demanded such a complete mobilization of the Nation's resources that every single individual has been called upon as in no other war to bear his share of the burden. The universal service law, the popular Liberty Bond campaigns, and Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. fund drives have immediately singled out and marked as "slackers" those who would not participate, no matter what their motives may have been.

The National Congress, however, influenced by numerous petitions from the non-resistant churches, by influential Quakers, the example of the English conscription act, and our own former precedents, included an exemption clause in the conscription law passed May 18, 1917. This clause was found in the bill as it came from the hands of the Committee on Military Affairs. It was debated, several attempts were made to amend it; and one vote was taken in the Senate to repeal it, but it stands now practically as it came from the hands of the committee. The clause exempts on religious grounds:

"Members of any well organized religious sect or organization at present organized and existing whose creed or principles forbid its members to participate in war in any form and whose religious convictions are against war or participation therein in accordance with the creed or principles of the said organization. But no person shall be exempted from service in any capacity that the President shall declare non-combatant."

Under this law a number of young Mennonites were drafted and taken to various camps during the summer and fall of 1917. In the meantime the church leaders were formulating the policy for the church at large toward the war problem. The view became quite general during the summer that in order to main-

tain their non-resistant principles they could not even accept non-combatant service if it was to be conducted under the military department of the Government. The Gospel Herald, the most conservative of the church papers, and representing over half of the constituency, not only opposed the acceptance of non-combatant service, but even declared it inconsistent to participate in Red Cross, Y. M. C. A. and Liberty Loan campaigns, and all other campaigns for direct war purposes. Several of the other papers reflected the same opinion, but none of them were so outspoken. The Mennonite, organ of the General Conference, while thoroughly in sympathy with the non-resistant attitude, advocated the purchase of bonds, and participation in all the auxiliary war fund drives. A meeting held at Goshen, Indiana, July 9-10, 1918, of representatives from practically all of the branches of the denomination, declared against entering non-combatant service under the military arm of the Government, and sent a petition to the President stating their decision. During all this time, too, a number of special committees from the various branches of the church were in communication with the War Department working in behalf of some sort of service not under the military organization.

The War Department in the meantime found the problem of the conscientious objector a difficult one. Many of the young men from all branches of the church refused to put on the uniform and to perform work of any sort. These were frequently roughly handled by petty officers who had little sympathy for their scruples nor the law under which they were permitted to enter non-combatant service. In all the camps they were subjected to ridicule and were considered fair game for any army officer or Y. M. C. A. secretary who cared to take a hand in converting them. Even some of the higher officers in some of the camps were entirely out of sympathy with the liberal policy of the War Department, and consequently permitted unnecessary abuse of the conscientious objectors, as those were called who refused to work in the camps even at non-combatant work, and usually refused to don the uniform. In Camp Funston the worst abuses prevailed, and two officers, a major and a captain, were

removed for negligence in permitting rough treatment of the conscientious objectors. Some of these men were brutally handled in the guard house; they were bayonetted, beaten and tortured by various forms of the water cure; eighteen men one night were aroused from their sleep and held under cold showers until one became hysterical. At another time a man had the hose played upon his head until he became unconscious. The War Department finally was forced to interfere a short time before the armistice was signed with the result noted above.

Fortunately for the Mennonites both President Wilson and Secretary Baker displayed the greatest consideration for the scruples of the sincere objectors. These abuses were not perpetrated with the consent of the War Department, and those guilty of them were usually punished as soon as discovered. Secretary Baker stretched the Conscription act to the limit to meet the situation. The Government was rather slow in working out a satisfactory policy, but by the spring of 1918 a fairly satisfactory system of taking care of the conscientious objector was evolved. The abuses above described continued in some of the camps, however, throughout the period of the war, due to the inability of the War Department to keep in close touch with all the details of the work of the vast military machine in charge of organizing the army.

On March 16, 1918, upon the suggestion of the War Secretary Congress passed a law permitting the department to furlough out certain men in camp for agricultural purposes whenever it was deemed advisable. On March 20, the President for the first time defined non-combatant service. On April 22, the War Department completed its program for the conscientious objectors who refused all work. First of all a special Board of Inquiry, consisting of Julian W. Mack, of the Federal Bench; Dean H. F. Stone of the Columbia Law School, and Major Richard C. Stoddard of the United States Army, was appointed to visit the various camps in which conscientious objectors had been segregated and weed out those who were sincere from the spurious ones. Those who were found to be sincere were to be sent to a detention camp at Fort Leavenworth, from whence

they were to be furloughed out for farm work. Court-martial was provided for three classes—the insincere, those who were defiant, and such as were engaged in active propaganda among others. The first class was to be sent into the ranks, while the other two were to be given prison sentence. This program was carried out only in part. The sincere objectors were not sent to the Fort Leavenworth detention camp, but were furloughed out for farm work directly from the camps to which they had been sent originally. Such as went to Fort Leavenworth did so under prison sentence.

The young men in the meantime in whose behalf the church was formulating its advice and the Government its war policy were compelled to work out their own line of action. Not all followed the recommendations of the Goshen meeting already referred to. As to the exact number who accepted some form of non-combatant service is not quite certain, since statistics have not yet been gathered. Neither has anyone ascertained as yet how many Mennonites were in all the camps. But since many had deferred classification both because of occupational and dependency reasons, the number was less than the general average of other classes. Perhaps between fifteen hundred and two thousand all told were in camp and overseas during the war.

Of these it would seem from such partial information as is now available that a large majority, take the denomination as a whole, refused service of any sort; a strong minority accepted non-combatant service with the uniform; while a very few entered the regular service. The church as a whole and especially the leadership stood quite unitedly in favor of maintaining the non-resistant doctrine. Among the young men, however, in different sections and in isolated congregations there was some difference of practise. The following random observations have come to the casual notice of the writer. The Hutterites were the only group whose young men stood as a unit against service of any sort. The Krimmer Brethren with a membership of nearly one thousand, had fifty young men in camp. Twenty-eight of these were conscientious objectors; twenty took non-combatant service; and two entered the regular service, one of

whom was killed on the battlefield. The Central Illinois Conference with a membership of twenty-six hundred reported in August in 1918, seventy-two men in the service. Of these twenty-six had enlisted; thirty-eight were in the regular service; twenty-seven were non-combatants, and only five were classed as conscientious objectors who refused all work. Of the Old Mennonites and Amish a large majority were conscientious objectors, though some of these accepted camp work. Among the Russians, both the General Conference and Bruedergemeinde, perhaps three-fourths of those in Kansas and Oklahoma, were of the conscientious objector class, while the remainder took non-combatant service. Barely a dozen among the Russians throughout the entire West took regular service. On the Pacific coast and in Minnesota there were a larger number of non-combatants and fewer conscientious objectors. The Eastern District Conference Mennonites generally accepted non-combatant service. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ were mostly of the conscientious objector class. The large Swiss community at Bluffton, Ohio, had a few men in the regular service, but all the rest were non-combatants. None were conscientious objectors. The Swiss congregation at Berne, on the other hand, had a number of conscientious objectors, several of whom were sent to Fort Leavenworth. One congregation in Iowa perhaps stood alone in having practically all of its young men in the regular service.

Mennonites were by no means the only people who refused to enter the army. Quakers, Dunkards and other peace denominations, totalling perhaps an entire population of one million, all came under the exemption clause of the Conscription act. Both the Quakers and the Dunkards, however, accepted the non-combatant service prescribed by the law far more generally than did the Mennonites. This circumstance, together with the fact that many of the latter were of more recent German origin, explains why the Mennonites were given more unfavorable publicity during the war than the other non-resistant denominations.

The original clause exempting only members of well recognized religious denominations was soon stretched by the War

Department to cover conscientious objectors of any religious organization or none. Scruples had to be on religious grounds, however. Objection to war on political grounds was not recognized as a valid reason for any degree of exemption. The following extract from an article written by the Vice Chairman of the National Civil Liberties Bureau in the Survey of December 7, 1918, summarizes the status of the various conscientious objectors and shows that they were a varied company:

"Of the twelve or fifteen hundred conscientious objectors examined by the Board of Inquiry, approximately eighty per cent are Christians, members of various sects opposed to war, of which the Quakers are the best known. The other twenty per cent. are international socialists, Tolstoians, Jews, and other objectors hard to classify. Jewish objectors on simple religious grounds are few; Roman Catholics still fewer. Only one I. W. W. appeared before the Board, and only three Negroes. Most of the objectors rest their cases on a simple, rather naive religious prohibition of war; some of them base their position on a lofty and carefully thought out idealism—Christian, socialistic and humanitarian."

Major Kellogg, a later member of the Board of Inquiry, in a recent book entitled "The Conscientious Objector," states that twenty-one hundred objectors were examined by the Board, half of whom he estimates were Mennonites. Of these fifteen hundred were recommended for farm or industrial furloughs; eighty for work in the Friends' Reconstruction Unit; three hundred and ninety for non-combatant service; and one hundred and twenty were sent back into the regular service as insincere. The above number does not include thirteen hundred who took non-combatant service, nor four hundred who were sent to Fort Leavenworth.

An interesting study made of one thousand conscientious objectors in twelve army camps by a special psychological board classifies those studied as follows:

Mennonites	554
Friends	80
International Bible Students	60

Dunkards	37
Israelites of the House of David	32
Church of Christ	31
Church of God (colored)	20
Seventh Day Adventist	20
Pentecostal Assembly	13
All other denominations	206

The conclusions of this special board were that the conscientious objectors ranked above the average in intelligence, although Major Kellogg declared that of the Mennonites who came under his observation less than ten per cent. had gone beyond the eighth grade in their educational progress. He credits them, however, with absolute sincerity and with a thorough knowledge of their Bibles.

Of the four hundred conscientious objectors confined in the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth at the close of the war, only about one-third were Mennonites. So far as the Mennonites and other religious objectors were concerned these were practically all here because of the wilful misrepresentations of local courts martial. The law provided only that the insincere and defiant be given prison sentence. The "wilful disobedience of orders of officers" which constituted the charge against practically all of these, of course, in reality meant the refusal of sincere objectors to obey orders which ran counter to their religious convictions.

Some of these prisoners at Fort Leavenworth, including a few Mennonites, suffered tortures that would have done credit to the medieval Inquisition at the hands of prison guards and officials for refusing to perform certain service which they regarded as inconsistent with their religious convictions. They were regarded by the prison authorities as ordinary criminals, and not as political prisoners. Some refused to work on the ground that the prison was a part of the military system; others, for various reasons, refused to put on the uniform; still others refused to work because of sympathy for those who were disciplined for unjust causes. Some of these men may have carried their logic to unnecessary lengths, but no matter what the provo-

cation, there was no justification for the harsh measures adopted in breaking the spirit of these men whose only crime was a tender conscience. Among the methods resorted to were "continuous solitary confinement in cells in a hole under the basement of the prison, sleeping on a cement floor between foul blankets full of vermin, fed every alternate two weeks on bread and water, forbidden to read and write or talk, manacled in a standing posture for nine hours a day to the bars of the cell. In addition they were frequently beaten and tortured by the guards."

Among those given this treatment were several Mennonites. Two Huterite young men died as a result of exposure and torture received at the hands of prison guards. Two young Amishmen sent here from Camp Sherman refused to don the prison uniform because their creed forbade them to wear clothes with buttons. Both were forcibly disrobed by guards and held under cold showers until they were thoroughly chilled. One of them was dragged across the cell room by the hair, knocked down upon the cement floor and then pulled up by the ears and otherwise roughly handled. As a result of this treatment both of them submitted to prison labor contrary to their religious convictions.

The National Civil Liberties Bureau, together with such journals as the Survey, Nation and the New Republic, gave these abuses of the conscientious objectors in the Leavenworth prison wide publicity with the result that a short time ago the War Department ordered the abolition of manacling and other severe methods of punishment. Still more recently, January 25, 1919, one hundred and thirteen of the conscientious objectors, mostly Mennonites, were honorably discharged from the army and released from prison. As stated about one hundred of these prisoners in Fort Leavenworth were Mennonites, principally from the western States, and largely from the Russian churches.

It is only fair to say, perhaps, that the large majority of the Mennonites at Fort Leavenworth had little cause to complain of their treatment as prisoners. It was only those who because of their tender consciences refused to perform the prison work

Convention of Young American Mennonites in Reconstruction Work at Clermont-en-Argonne, Meuse, France, June 20, 1919

Clermont Hill Where Convention Met. Ruins in Foreground.

assigned them and to put on the prison garb who were given the drastic treatment described above.

These hundred, of course, constituted only a small portion of the Mennonite conscientious objectors. The vast majority of them were furloughed out for farm work directly from their local camps. A number were permitted to enter the reconstruction work carried on by the Friends' Reconstruction Unit. The furlough system worked fairly well, but in some localities the non-Mennonite population objected to the presence of farm hands from the camps and they had to be sent back.

As to participation in the various campaigns for war and relief work there was a diversity of opinions and practise during the war. The leadership at first was quite generally agreed except among the more liberal congregations against any participation. But the pressure from local committees in most localities became so great that in almost every community there was a large number that supported the various campaigns for funds. The Old Mennonites, Amish, Defenceless, Reformed Mennonites and the Mennonite Brethren opposed all participation, but most of them under compulsion made some contribution to the various funds and bought bonds. Several attempts were made to escape the purchase of bonds directly by depositing money in local banks for a stipulated number of years, but which it was understood was not to be used for buying bonds, although it might release other money to be thus invested. In several localities scruples against supporting the war with money was satisfied by promising that money contributed would be used for the purchase of food, and not for ammunition and other means of warfare.

The Russians in the West as a rule contributed quite freely to Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross funds, but hesitated to buy bonds, although under compulsion many did so. The Middle District and the Eastern District of the General Conference, and the Central Illinois Conference bought quite freely, and contributed quite liberally to all funds.

Besides these funds the Old Mennonites and the Amish, assisted by the Central Illinois Conference and the Defenceless

Mennonites, contributed heavily toward reconstruction work in France. Up to date over $300,000 has been collected and the work is still going on. Since the war has been closed the Government has given them a new field of relief work in Armenia. The first relief ship with a number of volunteer workers left in early February, 1919, for that new field of labor. The Russian churches are also just beginning to collect funds for relief work among their own brethren in South Russia and Galicia.

In spite of these efforts, however, and in striking contrast to the considerate treatment accorded them by the Federal Government, Mennonites in most communities were harshly criticized and frequently abused by the non-Mennonite population. Throughout central Illinois a number of church buildings were painted yellow by irresponsible hoodlum elements, as was the case also in many other sections of the country. In Kansas several men were tarred and feathered. The most serious attacks were made upon the German speaking Russians in Oklahoma. One minister was seized by a mob and strung up a telegraph pole, but rescued by local officials. Two other men were attacked and driven out of their community for preaching the Mennonite doctrine of non-resistance. Two Mennonite church houses were burned down, as was also a barn which was being used as a temporary meeting place. In Ohio one prominent minister was called from a prayer meeting and had his hair shorn because his liberal donation to the Red Cross was not considered large enough by the mob which attacked him. Everywhere men were intimidated and abused by local committees for hesitating to purchase bonds or contribute to the various war funds, although Mennonites as a whole gave a great deal more to relief work than those who abused them. In South Dakota the Hutterites, after making liberal contributions, but refusing the excessive demand made by the local county committee, had hundreds of their sheep and cattle driven away and sold, the proceeds from which were to be invested in war funds. The perpetrators, fearing prosecution for their actions, would have been glad later to return the money, but the Hutterites demanded their stock.

Comparatively few communities escaped some form of intimidation or abuse from local mobs, or even Councils of Defence and self-styled Vigilance Committees. The newspapers, too, both local and metropolitan, throughout the entire country, were most bitter against the non-resistant churches, and especially the Mennonites, and many were unscrupulous in their attempts to stir up feeling against them. Few of the papers and few of the local communities were in sympathy with the liberal policy the Government followed toward the conscientious objectors. Only a few of the journals like the Survey, the New Republic and the Nation had the courage to defend those who refused to enter the war because of their religious convictions.

The Government authorities were quite lenient, too, toward Mennonite publications and church leaders, who, under the guarantee of religious liberty, were permitted considerable freedom in advising their constituencies against participating in war activities. One editor of a Mennonite paper, however, was fined $500 for printing an objectionable article. Most of the editors were wise enough in their papers to merely state the position of the church on all war questions, which under the guarantee of religious liberty they had a perfect right to do, but not to urge any opposition to the policies of the Government which under the Espionage act they could have been prosecuted for. A number of the Old Mennonite ministers who signed the Yellow Creek Conference resolutions advising the Mennonite young men against accepting non-combatant service were interviewed by Federal officials, and warned not to interfere too seriously with war measures. Judging from remarks made by some of these officials to outside parties, it would appear that had the war continued much longer several of the church leaders who were most outspoken against participating in the various war work campaigns would have been placed under certain restrictions for the period of the war.

What effect this war will have upon the non-resistants in the future it is difficult, of course, to tell. American Mennonites through a weeding out process have received from Europe those who strongly oppose war, and for that reason non-resistance

has always been a cardinal doctrine in the American church. The bitter opposition during the recent war of the general public to all forms of exemption would indicate that if miltarism should become the settled policy of the Nation, and especially if universal military service should unfortunately become compulsory, it would become increasingly difficult to maintain the non-resistant position. Let us hope, however, that the newly created League of Nations may make militarism unnecessary, and that the world may never again have to pass through such a trying time as these past four years have been.

CHAPTER XIX

SCHOOLS AND MISSIONS

The first Mennonite settlers in America in all the immigrations were for the most part a rural people, and without much opportunity for extended schooling. They were usually of the pioneer class, with little opportunity nor inclination to educate their young people beyond the bare rudiments of learning. In Pennsylvania there was no public school system during the eighteenth century, and each community was at liberty to work out its own school policy or none at all. In Germantown an academy was established quite early with Pastorious as teacher, and in most of the Mennonite communities private subscription schools were held, usually in the church houses. The curriculum in these schools of course was meager, consisting of the three conventional R's, to which was added a fourth—Religion. Christopher Dock, "the pious schoolmaster of the Skippack," though the best known, was only one of a large number of teachers who kept school in the Mennonite meeting houses before the coming of the public schools in Pennsylvania.

Among the more recent Russian immigrants, also in Kansas and other western States, elementary education became an important problem from the beginning. In the very first years after their arrival in the early seventies, while they were erecting their crude dwelling houses, they provided for a few months of school each year for their children which they extended to longer terms as soon as their pioneer tasks permitted. These were parochial schools established usually by the various congregations, in which Bible and German played a conspicuous part in the curriculum. English was also encouraged, however, in order that they might the more readily accommodate themselves to their American environment. Later, when the public schools were

established in the various communities, short terms of from one to four months of German schools were held each year in addition to the regular public school terms required by the state law. These schools are still maintained in many of the congregations and their purpose of course is to maintain the German language and to give the children instruction in the Bible and in church history. During the recent war, however, most of these elementary German schools were discontinued due to the prejudice among the non-Germans against the German language, but in some cases English schools were substituted.

In the field of higher education Mennonites showed little interest until well toward the close of the nineteenth century. Not that Mennonite youths never wandered along forbidden paths, for frequently some boy more ambitious than his comrades would find his way to a college or university, from which he would graduate with honors. But he seldom returned to the church from which he came, a fact which not only increased the prejudice universally found among the Mennonites before the middle of the last century against higher learning, but also deprived these churches of the very leadership needed to increase their interest in the higher things of life.

It finally began to dawn upon a few of the more enlightened leaders of the denomination that it was only through schools of their own that leaders for more aggressive work could be developed. The first to realize this fact was a small group from the General Conference branch of the church, among others—John H. Oberholtzer, Daniel Hoch, Daniel Krehbiel, and Ephraim Hunsberger. The founding of a school for the training of ministers was discussed in all of the early sessions of the Conference. In 1863 at the Summerfield, Illinois, session, it was decided to establish a school under the cumbersome title of "The Christian Educational Institution of the Mennonite Denomination." The institution was finally located at Wadsworth, Ohio, and first opened its doors to students on January 2, 1868. It was under the direct control of a committee appointed by the General Conference. Its relation to the Conference is discussed elsewhere in

this book and only the educational policy of the school will be mentioned here.

The purpose of the institution was largely to train young men for Christian work. Religion and church doctrine were given a prominent place in the curriculum, though secular subjects were also taught. One member of the faculty was the "Theological Professor." The course of study covered three years. Prospective students were admitted by examination, and no qualifications were prescribed other than a good character and an age limit between eighteen and thirty. The instruction was to be principally in the German language, even the Pennsylvanians at this time using that language exclusively in their worship. The school was for boys only. Early in its history, the Pennsylvania churches suggested that it be made co-educational, but the Germans from the West and especially the "Theological Professor," van der Smissen, and his wife opposed the suggestion so strongly that women were never admitted. The practical natures of the promoters is shown in the provision that each student was to spend three hours each day in some sort of manual labor "for the sake of their mental and physical health and for the benefit of the institution." That this program was carried out is evidenced by glancing through a random list of assignments made by the steward for one day. On this particular day one person was to do stable work; two were to peel potatoes; two were to carry wood to the kitchen, and another was to take a wagon to the blacksmith; still another was to fasten the wash line; three were to work at carpentering and two at shoemaking; two persons were to saw wood and one to borrow the saw in town; one was to go after the mail, another to take meat to Hunsberger's to be smoked, while all the rest were to cut wood.

Thus it was hoped that expenses could be kept down. But the cost of getting an education at Wadsworth was not high. For the sum of one hundred dollars per year the student was entitled to "instruction, board, lodging, washing, fuel and light."

As already seen, the school was forced to close its doors in 1878. The experiment in higher education, however, was not a failure. Many of the later leaders of the church received their

initial training in this pioneer Mennonite institution.

The demand for a church school especially among the Russian and South German churches in the West did not die with Wadsworth, however. Soon after the closing of the Ohio institution the Kansas Conference established a small "Vorbereitungsschule" in the Alexanderwohl congregation near Newton, Kansas, with H. H. Ewert as principal in 1882. The next year a building was erected at Halstead, and the institution was maintained under the same management as a "Fortbildungschule." Mr. Ewert remained in charge of the institution until 1890 when he was called to head the pioneer educational work among the Mennonites of Manitoba. In 1893, in the meantime the Halstead institution gave way to Bethel College at Newton which was controlled by a voluntary association, but with Conference sanction and support. David Goerz, one of the pioneer immigrants, became the business manager of the College, and from this time until his death in 1914, devoted his best efforts to the educational interests of his people. C. H. Wedel as president of the Faculty was made the educational head which position he held until his death in 1910. Bethel College has made its influence felt strongly throughout the western churches from the beginning, furnishing many of the church leaders and missionaries. Recently an attempt was made to bring the school directly under the control of the Western District Conference, but so far that has not been accomplished. The last catalogue shows an attendance of two hundred and seventy-one, not including special music students; and a Faculty of twenty-five during the past year.

The Old Mennonites and the Amish-Mennonites did not awaken to the need of a church school until within the last twenty-five years, and even then there was very little sentiment in favor of such an institution in the two branches of the church mentioned. Goshen College owes its existence to the foresight of a small group of progressive men who realized that young and efficient leadership could be secured and maintained only through an educational institution controlled by the church. In 1895, this group of men formed an association and secured funds for a building at Elkhart, Indiana, for a preparatory and Bible school.

Bethel College.

This institution, called Elkhart Institute, was the outgrowth of a private normal and business school founded several years earlier by Dr. H. A. Mumaw of Elkhart. In 1902, the school was moved to Goshen and enlarged into a college under the name of Goshen College. This college has already trained most of the foreign missionaries and many of the younger leaders of the church. Among a long list of pioneers in the history of this pioneer institution among the Old Mennonites and Amish-Mennonites must be mentioned John S. Coffman, pioneer evangelist, who took a leading part in the founding of the Elkhart school, and was the president of the Board of Trustees until his death in 1899; Jonas S. Hartzler, who as secretary and treasurer for over twenty years bore the chief financial burden of both schools which often were exceedingly arduous; and Noah E. Byers who first as principal of the Elkhart school and later as president of Goshen College moulded the early educational policy of the institution during the formative years.

The Bruedergemeinde co-operated for a few years after 1898 with the Dunkard college at McPherson, Kansas, in their educational work, but in 1908 they founded their own school, Tabor College, at Hillsboro, Kansas. A fire in 1918 destroyed the entire plant, but a vigorous campaign for funds secured $100,000 for new equipment. Among the leaders in the founding and present management of Tabor College are H. W. Lohrenz, president, and D. E. Harder, secretary, a member of the Krimmer Brueder who are affiliated with the Bruedergemeinde in their educational work.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ also attempted to found a Bible Training school at Elkhart in 1902. A small group of Indiana members secured the Elkhart Institute building in which a school was held for several years, but owing to opposition and lack of support the work had to be abandoned.

The latest and most ambitious venture in the Mennonite field of education was the co-operative movement culminating in the founding of Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary. This institution owes its origin to several sources. In a number of issues of the Mennonite of 1912 we find several articles written

by Rev. Silas M. Grubb, of Philadelphia, advocating a Mennonite Seminary located preferably at Germantown, Pennsylvania. Dr. S. K. Mosiman, president of Central Mennonite College, in replying to these articles suggests that a number of branches cooperate in establishing such an institution. President N. E. Byers, of Goshen College in 1913 in a letter to President Mosiman suggested that various branches co-operate not only in organizing a seminary, but in establishing a standard college as well, preferably in connection with one of the three colleges already in existence. Shortly after this and as a result of the last suggestion three college presidents, N. E. Byers, S. K. Mosiman and J. W. Kliewer, of Bethel College, together with A. S. Shelly from Pennsylvania met in Chicago for a preliminary discussion concerning the question. This conference resulted in the calling of a meeting of unofficial representatives from five branches of the church at Warsaw, Indiana, to discuss further plans At this meeting representatives were present from the General Conference Mennonites, Old Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Illinois Conference, and Defenceless Mennonites. Here it was decided to establish a co-operative institution in connection with Central Mennonite College which had been founded at Bluffton, Ohio, in 1902, by the Middle District Conference, offering work in three departments—College of Liberal Arts, Theological Seminary, and Conservatory of Music. The following year the Trustees of Central Mennonite College turned the college over to the new organization—Bluffton College and Mennonite Seminary, with S. K. Mosiman as president and N. E. Byers as dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Another year later J. H. Langenwalter became the dean of the seminary. John Ropp of Bloomington, Illinois through liberal financial support at the right time became an important factor in making the institution possible. The school has had a steady growth since its founding in 1914. The catalogue of 1918 shows that during that year including the summer term, three hundred and forty different students were enrolled in all departments of whom one hundred and fifty-three were in the College of Liberal Arts, sixteen in the Seminary, and the remainder were enrolled as special and music students.

In addition to the colleges just mentioned a number of preparatory and Bible schools have also been established by various branches of the church, mostly in the West among the Russians. The Gretna Normal school founded in Manitoba in 1891 has already been mentioned, as has also the school at Rosthern Saskatchewan. Among the Russians a number of schools have been founded which at first were intended in a way as advanced schools in which German and religion were especially stressed, but which have since become rather preparatory schools.

Most of these are under the control of local churches and school associations. The General Conference Committee on Education in 1917 reported on nine of these schools as follows:

Alexanderwohl und Tabor Gemeindeschule, Goessel, Kan.
Bethesda Fortbildungsschule, Henderson, Nebraska.
Vorbereitungsschule, Mt. Lake, Minnesota.
Fortbildungsschule, Beatrice, Nebraska.
German-English Preparatory school, Gotebo, Oklahoma.
Hoffnungsau Vereinschule, Inman, Kansas.
Mennonitische Lehranstalt, Gretna, Manitoba.
Vorbereitungsschule, Hillsboro, Kansas.
Vorbereitungsschule, Meno, Oklahoma.

Four hundred and fifty-one pupils attended these nine schools during that year.

Not included in the above list is the Fortbildungschule at Moundridge, Kansas; the Training school at Rosthern Saskatchewan; Freeman College, Freeman, South Dakota; and the

Zoar Vorbereitung und Bibel Schule under the control of the Krimmer Brueder at Inman, Kansas.

Among the Old Mennonites Hesston Academy and Bible School at Hesston, Kansas, was established in 1909, and the Eastern Mennonite Bible School at Harrisonburg, Virginia, in 1917.

All of these schools have done great service in educating the leadership of the church and in furnishing opportunities for an education to many young men and women who otherwise might never have had a chance to get an education. A casual survey of current university catalogues shows that at least ten of the state universities of the Middle West, besides a number of the smaller colleges throughout the land have Mennonites on their Faculties.

Missions and Evangelization

The awakening of the entire church to the need of educating its young people was only one of the evidences of a renewed spiritual life. At the same time, too, there developed an interest in other lines of aggressive work such as Sunday schools, evangelization and missions.

Here, too, the General Conference took the lead. It was for the cause of evangelization and home missions that Hoch, Oberholtzer and Daniel Krehbiel urged a closer union among their congregations in the late fifties of the last century. The founding of a missionary society was one of the first official acts of the Conference, but it was some time before any attempt was made to engage in actual foreign mission work. S. S. Haury, a graduate of the Wadsworth school, became the first volunteer, but the Conference remained undecided for a number of years both as to the location of a mission station and as to the best means of establishing the work. After some communication with the Amsterdam missionary society, with a view to supporting their work in the East Indies, it was decided to form an independent organization, and to begin work among our own native North American Indians. S. S. Haury and J. B. Baer made an extended trip through Alaska looking for a desirable field for Indian mis-

Standing Elk, or Chief Vuhokasa (Light) and Daughter.
Members of Mennonite Church at Lame Deer, Montana.

sion work, but returned undecided. Finally in 1880 Haury established the first mission station among the Arrapahoe Indians at what is now Darlington, Oklahoma. Later on other stations were opened up among other tribes in the old Indian Territory, and also among the Hopis in Arizona, and the Cheyennes in Montana. All of this work is still being carried on.

The first mission station abroad was founded in India in 1900, by missionaries Rev. P. A. Penner and J. F. Kroeker and their wives. Since then another station has been established in China. The Foreign Mission Committee of the General Conference reported at the last Conference session that at that time forty white and seventy-five native workers were engaged in carrying on the work in these various stations in America and abroad.

Among the Old Mennonites and Amish-Mennonites the Mennonite Publishing Company at Elkhart, Indiana, and the progressive congregation at that place served as the center of the progressive movement. Among the most influential men here were John F. Funk, founder and president of the company, and J. S. Coffman, pioneer evangelist. During the late eighties and early nineties of the last century Coffman aroused the entire church through the Middle West and Canada through extended evangelistic tours, the first of their kind in the church. Among the aggressive movements following these campaigns was a series of Sunday school conventions, at first including all the congregations throughout the Middle West, but later held in each State. Here the younger men and women were first given an opportunity to discuss church problems. One of these problems was that of missions. Among the earliest advocates of the cause was M. S. Steiner of Bluffton, Ohio. In 1893 at a Sunday school conference at Bluffton, Steiner was appointed as superintendent of a proposed mission in Chicago. Since then city missions have been established in a number of the larger cities. Steiner, who remained a leading advocate of the mission cause until his death in 1909, was also largely influential, together with others, in securing the appointment of the first missionaries to India in 1898—Dr. and Mrs. W. B. Page and J. A. Ressler. This mission has since grown to large proportions and is said to

be one of the best equipped stations in that section of India. In 1917, two families, Rev. and Mrs. T. K. Hershey, and Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Shank, were sent to Argentine in South America for the purpose of opening a station in that country.

The Bruedergemeinde early manifested a deep interest in both foreign and home missions. They supported their first native worker in a foreign field in 1883. In 1885 the first mission board was established. Native workers were supported in India, Africa and the North America Indians. The first foreign station was established in India in 1898. At present they have nine missionaries on the foreign field and others in the home field. The contributions have grown from forty dollars in 1883, to over forty-seven thousand in 1918, an average of $7.10 for every member.

The Krimmer Brueder, numbering barely a thousand, support a mission among the Negroes in North Carolina. They also have stations in Mexico and several missionaries in Africa and China.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ support a large number of both home and foreign missionaries, about fifty serving abroad just before the war, in Africa, Armenia, China, India, Thibet, and South America. The first foreign missionary from this branch of the church was Eusebius Hershey, who in 1887 went to Africa on his own initiative without either church support or authority. Later, however, the church actively supported the cause, being especially active since 1900.

The Central Illinois Conference of Mennonites and the Defenceless Mennonites have formed a united society in behalf of a station in Africa.

Considering the fact that the mission interest is only of recent growth among the Mennonites what has thus far been accomplished promises well for the future. The support now given the work compares favorably with that of some of the churches which have been engaged in missionary efforts for a much longer period. According to the statistics for the past year the average per capita contributions for the year for both foreign and home missions was as follows:

Old Mennonite Mission at Sundarganj, Dhamtari, India.

Defenceless Mennonites	$8.30
Mennonite Brethren in Christ	7.50
Bruedergemeinde	7.10
Krimmer Bruedler	6.00
General Conference	6.00
Old and Amish-Mennonites	5.00
Central Illinois Conference	4.95

All of these branches of the church have always responded liberally to every call of the needy and hungry for help. Especially liberal was Mennonite support toward the relief work in India in the late nineties and more recently in Armenia and other needy countries.

A number of them support their own Old People's Homes, Children's Homes, Deaconess Hospital, Tuberculosis Sanitarium and other charitable and philanthropic institutions.

CHAPTER XX

LITERATURE AND HYMNOLOGY

The Mennonites likewise were not a literary folk. Being for the most part a rural people and of a religious turn of mind they had few ambitions beyond the desire to make an honest living for themselves and their families, and a passion to serve their God according to their convictions. The first comers to America brought few books with them, perhaps a well worn Bible, a copy of their Confession of Faith and a prayer book. Occasionally one might find a family owning an old Dutch copy of the Martyr Book, a family heirloom likely, and soon unreadable by the younger generation. An occasional copy of the works of Menno Simons, too, in the same language could be found. The first meager supply of necessary books evidently was soon exhausted, for in 1708 the Germantown church wrote to Germany for a supply of Bibles, prayer books and catechisms.

The first book printed expressly for the American Mennonites, strange to say, was an English edition of their Confession of Faith, issued at Amsterdam in 1712, and reprinted at Philadelphia in 1727. With one or two exceptions this was the only English edition of a standard Mennonite book for over a century and a half. The demand among the Mennonites at this particular time, according to the preface of the first edition, was for the purpose of setting themselves right with their fellow English colonists, for "the greatest part of the people doth not know what they (Mennonites) confess of the Word of God and by reason of that ignorance can't speak and judge rightly of their confession nor of the confessors themselves, nay through prejudice as a strange and unheard of thing do abhor them so as not to speak well but oftimes ill of them."

The most highly prized book among the early Mennonites, next to the Bible, was the old Martyr Book. This book, as its name suggests, is a compiled record of the sufferings and death of a long list of marytrs principally of the non-resistant faith through all the ages, and including the Waldenses, Wycliffites, Hussites, Anabaptists and Mennonites, as well as various religious sects of the medieval and ancient times from the days of the Apostles themselves. It was highly regarded because it told not only of the trials and sufferings of those of their own and kindred faiths, but often of those of their own blood; for many of the martyrs bore names still familiar among the Pennsylvania Mennonites and their descendants. The book was a voluminous work, as large as the old family Bible, and was first issued in its present form in the Dutch language in 1660 by Thielman J. van Bracht, a Dutch Mennonite theologian. The full title rendered into English reads, "The Bloody Theatre or Martyrs' Mirror of the Defenceless Christians who baptized on Confession of Faith and who suffered and died for the Testimony of Jesus their Savior from the time of Christ to the Year 1660."

There seemed little demand among the first generation of pioneers for more than the occasional copies of the book which the first settlers brought with them. But by the middle of the century the dangers which threatened the doctrine of non-resistance among their young people because of the colonial wars created a demand for their book of martyrs, written in a language that could be read by all. After attempting in vain to have the work published in Germany, the Pennsylvania churches contracted with the monks of the Ephrata cloister for an edition of thirteen hundred copies. The undertaking was an arduous one and it took three years to finish it. The Ephrata Brethren were obliged to manufacture their own paper, make the translation from the Dutch into the German, and do all the printing and binding. The book was issued in 1748, a large volume of over fourteen hundred pages, the most ambitious publication undertaking in Pennsylvania up to that time. The Martyrs Mirror has gone through a number of editions since then, the last English edition coming from the press at Elkhart, Indiana, in 1887, and

a German edition printed at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, as recently as 1916.

The various works of Menno Simons were also familiar, but these were printed only in fragments. Among Menno's treatises the most important is the "Foundation Book," which contains the most complete statement of his views. This was printed as a pamphlet at Lancaster in 1794 and was the first of his works to appear in an American edition. Other treatises were published through the nineteenth century, but the first complete edition was issued in German at Elkhart in 1876 and in English on the same press in 1871.

Deitrich Philip, a co-laborer of Menno's, also wrote several books, the best known of which was "Enchiridion" or Handbook, a treatise on the characteristic Anabaptist doctrines, first published at Haarlem in 1578. The first American edition was published at Lancaster in 1811. Two later German editions appeared, and in 1910 it was translated into English by A. B. Kolb and published at Elkhart. It is still occasionally read among the Old Order Amish because the author stresses the strict observance of the Avoidance practise. Philip was also one of the few old authors to write at length on the ordinance of feet-washing.

Among other books found occasionally on the bookshelves of the Mennonite pioneers were several books of sermons written for the most part by Dutch and North German ministers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Among these compilations were those of Jacob Denner (1659-1745), for many years a minister at Altona, and those written by Johan Deknatel, originally printed in Dutch, but later in 1757 in German. The latter were never issued in America, but Denner's collection was printed in 1792 in Germany at the expense of two Pennsylvanians for the Pennsylvania Mennonites. The book was a large volume of over 1,500 pages and the edition consisted of five hundred copies. In 1830 a book of sermons by Wilhelm Wyngantz, also a minister at Altona, in 1654, was translated from the Dutch by David Zug, an Amishman, of Belleville, Pennsylvania, and published at Lancaster.

John F. Funk, Bishop of Old Mennonite Church. Founder of Herald of Truth 1864, and Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Ind.

Among other old books popular in Mennonite homes for years, all in German, were "Golden Apples in Silver Shells," printed at Ephrata in 1745 at the request of the Mennonite church; "Spiritual Flower Garden of the Inner Soul," published for the eighth time in America in 1800; and "The Wandering Soul," written by a Mennonite minister at Alkmaar, J. P. Schabalie, in the seventeenth century, printed many times in the Dutch, translated into the German and recently published for the sixteenth time at Philadelphia.

The first book written by an American author was "A Mirror of Baptism with Spirit, Water and Blood," published in 1744 on the Christopher Sauer press and in four later editions. The author, Bishop Heinrich Funck, migrated to America in 1717 and became the founder of a long line of Funks, many of them prominent publishers, including J. F. Funk, founder of the Mennonite Publishing Company of Elkhart; Joseph Funk, pioneer Virginia printer, and Isaac Funk, member of the Funk-Wagnall firm. Bishop Funk also wrote a more extended work, "Restitution," a treatise on a number of the principal points of the Law, their fulfillment and significance. The book was published by his children after his death, was reprinted at Lancaster in 1862, and was put through an English edition at Elkhart as late as 1915. This book has the distinction of being the only American Mennonite work to be published abroad, being issued at Biel, Switzerland, in 1844.

Christian Funk, son of the above, and founder of the first division in the American church, published at Germantown in 1785 a justification of his activities, which in 1805 appeared in English as "A Mirror for all Mankind."

Another book of the eighteenth century worthy of mention was Christopher Dock's "Schul Ordnung," published after his death in 1770 by Christopher Sauer Jr. This small pamphlet describes Dock's method of conducting a successful country school—how he receives his children; how he teaches them their A, B, C's; how he maintains discipline; how he secures the love of the children, etc. Being the earliest American treatise on record on the subject of school teaching, the work has received

more attention from writers on the history of education than it otherwise would merit. Dock also wrote a number of poems and "A Hundred Rules of Conduct for Children." Some of these rules are interesting, including this one on table manners: "Rule 34. The bones, or what remains over, do not throw under the table, do not put them under the tablecloth, but let them lie on the edge of the plate."

During the early and middle nineteenth century the books of Mennonite authorship were for the most part controversial in character and were written by the founders of various church divisions in defence of their views and activities. Among these men were John Herr, John H. Oberholtzer (1809-1895), Jacob Stauffer, and John Holdeman (1832-1900).

The most valuable literary work done in the last hundred years has been that in the field of church history. The earliest work in this field was Benjamin Eby's "Short History of the Mennonites," which appeared first in 1841 in Berlin, Canada, and whose chief merit is that it appeared first. Daniel Musser's "History of the Reformed Mennonite Church" was published at Lancaster in 1873. A "Brief History of the Mennonites," by Professor C. H. Wedel of Bethel College, in four volumes (1901-1904), is the best and most readable work on the subject that has yet appeared, although too much space is devoted to the pre-Mennonite period on the untenable theory that Mennonite history must be traced back to Apostolic days. C. H. A. van der Smissen, pastor at Summerfield at the time, published in 1895 an excellent short treatise on the history and the doctrines of the Mennonites, which also included his father's translation of the Cornelis Ris Confession of Faith. H. P. Krehbiel's exhaustive "History of the General Conference," published in 1898, will undoubtedly remain the authoritative work on the early history of that movement. Hartzler and Kauffman's "Mennonite Church History" was printed at Scottdale in 1905. The same press published also in 1916 "Menno Simons, His Life, Labors and Teachings," by John Horsch, which next to the comprehensive book by Vos, the Dutch Mennonite theologian, is the most important recent study of this early leader of the church. In 1917 appeared Dean

J. H. Langenwalter's "Christ's Headship of the Church as Taught by Those Anabaptists Who Later Were Called Mennonites."

All of these books with a few exceptions among the recent works appeared in the German language.

In any discussion of the reading matter to which our Mennonite forefathers had access and which they perused for pleasure or profit we must by no means neglect to mention Suers' Almanac, issued at Germantown during the eighteenth century, and Baer's Almanac from Lancaster, printed throughout the nineteenth century and still found for sale in the bookstores of every Pennsylvania German community. Important, too, as sources of valuable historical information are the various Year Books published by the presses of the Old Mennonites and the General Conference Mennonites.

In the field of Mennonite hymnology the old Ausbund easily holds the center of interest. The Ausbund, which is undoubtedly the oldest hymnbook still in use anywhere in America, consists of a collection of one hundred and forty hymns from various sources, including a nucleus of fifty-one originally composed for the most part by a group of Swiss Mennonite captives driven out of Austria and imprisoned in the castle of Passau on the Bavarian frontier between 1535 and 1537. This collection was first printed about 1571, since which time twelve editions appeared in South Germany and Switzerland, the last issue being printed at Basel in 1838. This book became the adopted hymnal of the Swiss and South German Mennonites for several hundred years. When the first Palatines came to Pennsylvania they brought this book with them, as did also the Swiss Mennonites and the Alsatian Amish in Ohio and Illinois in the early nineteenth century. The first American edition was printed at Germantown in 1742. It has appeared in eleven American editions since, the last appearing at Elkhart in 1913.

This old book was never revised, merely reprinted, thus perpetuating its original quaint colloquial Swiss-German. Many of the hymns are detailed narratives by the trials and the sufferings of the early martyrs; others consist of lengthy discourses upon some points of doctrines. Few of them possess anything

of a lyrical or subjective quality. Most of them are long, several of them consisting of some scores of stanzas. They were printed without music. The melodies to which they were sung were transmitted from one generation to another and in the process tunes were developed that defied both rhythm and time. To sing one song often required the better part of an hour. The opening verse of the Haslibacher hymn, often sung among the Old Order Amish, among whom the book is still in use, is typical of many of the songs:

"Was wend wir aber heben an
Zu singen von ein'm alten Mann
Der war von Haslibach
Haslibacher ward er genannt
Aus der Kilchoeri Sumiswald."

Another collection of hymns almost equally as venerable as those of the Ausbund is the collection used in worship by the Huterites, many of which are also martyr stories first told in the sixteenth century. The collection was preserved in manuscripts in the archives of the various Bruderhofs and were not put in print until 1910, when the Dakota Huterites had them published at Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

Before the close of the eighteenth century the Pennsylvania Mennonites, but not the Amish, had discarded the Ausbund, whose place was taken by different psalm and hymnbooks. In order to secure a book for common use the Franconia Mennonites had published at Germantown a new hymnal, "Die Kleine Geistliche Harfe," in 1803, which went through a number of editions in the course of the century, being printed for the sixth time at Lancaster in 1870. About the same time, too, another book was published at Lancaster in 1804 called the "Unpartheisches Gesangbuch," which was printed for the sixth time in 1841, at which time it was stereotyped and all later reprints were of the sixth edition. The book is still in use in places. It contained many of the hymns of the old Ausbund. In 1871 the Mennonite Publishing Company at Elkhart, Indiana, published the "Allgemeine Lieder Sammlung" for the Old Mennonites and Amish which went through a second edition with an Eng-

lish appendix in 1877. "Eine Unpartheische Lieder Sammlung" came from the Baer press at Lancaster in 1870. The various immigrant groups during the past century brought with them their own hymnals, but such as later joined the General Conference movement adopted the book "Gesangbuch zum Gottesdienstlichen und Hauslichen Gebrauch," which the Conference published in 1873.

The first English hymnal was printed by the Virginia Mennonites in 1847 under the title of "A Selection of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs." The book was reprinted five times on the handpress of Joseph Funk at Singer's Glen, and the copyright was sold later to the Mennonite Publishing Company, where the book was published in several later editions.

All these hymnals were without notes. For the purpose of furnishing new melodies for the old hymns Joseph Funk in 1832 published a "notebook," the "Harmonia Sacra," which in course of time passed through seventeen editions and in 1875 was succeeded by the "Philharmonia," issued at Elkhart to serve the same purpose. The General Conference in 1890 published a book with words and notes called "Gesangbuch mit Noten," and the Elkhart house a little later published a similar work for the Old Mennonites. Since then several new song books have been issued.

The Mennonites had no early printing presses. Their first books were printed by a number of well known printing firms of the early days, notably the Christopher Sauer press, that of the Ephrata Brethren, and later the establishment of Johan Baer. The first Mennonite to venture into the printing and publishing business was Henry Bertolet of Skippack, who in 1836 published a paper called "Religiöeser Botschafter." The undertaking aroused so much opposition, however, among his brethren that he was obliged to suspend the publication after the first issue. Joseph Funk in 1847 set up at a little hamlet in Virginia called Singers Glen a small hand press on which for many years he published a number of song books and other productions. In 1852 John H. Oberholtzer erected a small press at Milford Square, Pennsylvania, upon which was printed the

"Religioeser Botschafter," named after Bertolet's paper, undoubtedly, which was later taken over by a printing company, and after undergoing several changes in name was finally united in 1881 with "Zur Heimat," a paper published by David Goerz since 1875, for the Russian immigrants. The new publication was called "Christlicher Bundesbote," and is now published by the General Conference Publication Committee. The "Mennonite," the English organ of the General Conference, was founded by the Eastern District Conference in 1885, and taken over by the General Conference in 1901. The most ambitious of the private Mennonite printing establishments was that founded by John F. Funk and his brother in Chicago in 1864, but soon after removed to Elkhart, Indiana, under the name of Mennonite Publishing Company. This firm for many years published the Herald of Truth in both the English and German editions, which was read widely by various branches of the denomination, and also a number of the old standard Mennonite books that otherwise would not have been accessible to the average reader.

These enterprises were all under private control. The first plant controlled by the church was the Mennonite Book Concern, founded by the General Conference at Berne, Indiana, in 1884. The Mennonite Publishing House at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, owned by the Old Mennonite and Amish-Mennonite Conferences, was founded in 1908 by securing the rights of both the Old Mennonite Publishing Company of Elkhart and the Gospel Witness Company, which had been established by private parties a few years before and had published the Gospel Witness. This paper was now united with the former Herald of Truth into the Gospel Herald. The Mennonite Publishing House now also publishes the "Rundschau," a paper read widely by the Russians, and the "Christian Monitor," a paper for young people. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ appointed a publication committee in 1879 to secure a partial equipment to print the "Gospel Banner." The enterprise did not succeed and the paper was issued by private plants, but under Conference editorship until 1916, when the General Conference purchased the Bethel Publishing Company, established in 1903 by J. A. Huffman.

Goshen College.

Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Penn.

This church now owns its own publishing house and publishes its own periodicals and church literature. The Bruedergemeinde also owns its own plant at Hillsboro, Kansas, which publishes the official organ of the church, the "Zionsbote." The Krimmer Brueder publish the "Wahrheitsfreund" on their own press in Chicago. A number of congregations of the Eastern and Middle Districts of the General Conference publish local papers which frequently contain articles of more than local interest, as do also the different Mennonite Colleges.

Several other branches of the church issue periodicals, but do not own their own publishing plants. The "Christian Evangel," organ of the Central Illinois Conference, was founded in 1910; "Zion's Call," representing the Defenceless Mennonites, appeared first in 1898; the "Heilsbote," a German paper, is no longer published; "Der Mitarbeiter," published at Gretna, Manitoba, since 1905, is the official organ of the various church enterprises of the Manitoba Mennonites; "Herold der Wahrheit" represents the Old Order Amish. There are several other publications representing small branches and special enterprises.

CHAPTER XXI

DOCTRINE AND PRACTISE

Mennonitism is the essence of individualism, and consequently Mennonites as a body were never committed to any one particular Confession of Faith. Their religious beliefs are to be gathered from different sources—writings of early church leaders, public debates with state church theologians, testimonies of martyrs, decisions of conferences, and a variety of Confessions of Faith. Among the leaders only Menno Simons and Dirck Philip wrote at length on questions of church doctrine; the debates include such general discussions as the Frankenthal Disputation of 1571. The Wismar rules of 1554, the Strasburg Conference called to discuss these rules in 1557, and a later famous meeting at the same place in 1568, are typical of the conferences. Of confessions there were a variety drawn up by different parties and factions, frequently forming a basis of co-operation between opposing groups.

The earliest known Anabaptist statement of principles is the brief summary of seven articles drawn up at Schleitheim in South Germany in 1527, supposedly formulated by Michael Sattler. During the remainder of the sixteenth century, which was one of severe persecution, few confessions were formulated, but the testimonies of hundreds of men and women who suffered at the stake leave no doubt as to the fundamental religious beliefs for which they laid down their lives.

The first third of the seventeenth century was a period of attempted reconciliation among various Mennonite parties in Holland. It was during this time that most of the Confessions of Faith, most of which were composed to serve as a basis of union, were written. One of the earliest of these was the Concept of Cologne drawn up in 1591, at Cologne and signed by represent-

atives of the Frisian, Flemish and High German churches along the Rhine. A little later, about 1600, according to van Bracht appeared the long Confession of thirty-three articles said to have been written by Pieter Janz Twisck and copied in the Martyrs Mirror. This Confession went through an American edition, being published at Winchester, Virginia, by Elder Peter Burkholder. The Hans de Ries Confession written as early as 1581 and officially adopted some thirty years later represented the liberal Waterlander churches in Holland and evidently was written to prove that the Mennonites were not Socinians. In 1627, the Olive Branch articles signed by Tobias Govertz and three other Dutch ministers attempted to bring about a union between the Dutch Flemish and Frisian churches. Although not immediately successful in attaining its object it later came to have a wide circulation. The Jan Cents Confession which also appears in the Martyrs Mirror served as a common basis of faith for a number of united Frisian and upper German congregations. One of the best known of the Confessions was the Dordrecht statement of 1632, signed by fifty-one representatives from seventeen Dutch congregations in Holland and Northwestern Germany in behalf of the Frisian and upper German parties. This has been perhaps the most widely used of all the Confessions. In 1660, it was adopted by the churches in Alsace and the Palatinate. It was imported early into Pennsylvania, and became the accepted statement of faith for the early American church. It teaches conservative doctrines and advocates a strict discipline, and is still the recognized Confession for the Old Mennonites, Amish, and the Central Illinois Conference of Mennonites.

More than one hundred years later, in 1766, appeared the liberal Cornelis Ris Confession first written to unite the Frisian and liberal Waterlander congregations in Hoorn, Holland. Later, in 1773, it was adopted at Amsterdam by a number of congregations of Holland which met in conference in the church called "The Sun." It was also accepted some time later by some of the Prussian congregations, but was given little recognition in South Germany. In 1849, C. J. van der Smissen, pastor of the Friedrichstadt church, made a new translation into the German,

and in 1902 the General Conference of Mennonites of North America authorized an English translation. This Confession being originally a compromise between two liberal groups is one of the more liberal statements of Mennonite faith.

Among other Confessions of Faith which had more or less of a vogue among certain groups of congregations during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the Flemish Confession written by George Hansen, minister at Danzig in 1678 for the Mennonites called the "Clarichen;" the Gerhard Roosen statement of 1702 in use for many years at Altona and also in South Germany; the Old Flemish Confession of 1755; and the formulary authorized by the South Germans at Ibersheim in 1803. Among recent revisions and new Confessions are the 1895 revision of the West Prussian Conference, and the1896 revision for the Russian churches. The Bruedergemeinde both in Russia and America use the Confession first adopted in Russian in 1873. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ have issued their own confessions and Disciplines since 1880. The Defenceless Mennonites adopted a revised edition of their Confession in 1917. The Huterites still follow the principles laid down in Peter Riedeman's "Rechenschaft" in 1543. The General Conference representing the Old Mennonites and the Amish-Mennonites published at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, in 1914 an exhaustive treatise written by various leaders of the church, of all the doctrines and practises as taught by that wing of the denomination.

Mennonite theology has never been fundamentally philosophical, but decidedly Biblical. Leaders of Mennonite thought never concerned themselves much with fine spun theories and philosophical distinctions made by the theologians of the day; but they expressed themselves in speech and writing on all questions of church doctrine in terms of Biblical phraseology. Their statements, well buttressed with Scriptural references, were inclined toward a literal interpretation of the Bible. And then, too, correct living seemed to appeal to them more strongly than a discussion of obscure points of doctrine which largely, because of their early training, they could not understand anyway. For this reason one finds little reference in these Confessions to the

fundamental philosophical questions which were puzzling the heads of the churchmen of the times. Only two of the Confessions—those of Peter Janz Twisck and Cornelis Ris, contain any mention of the doctrine of the Freedom of the Will. On the question of Calvinism, Mennonites can hardly be classified. In the seventeenth century, however, they were regarded as Arminians, and so far as their position on the Free Will controversy was concerned they were perhaps properly classified, although they did not accept the entire system of reasoning of the Arminians. Cornelis Ris approached the Calvinistic position on many points, but stopped short of the goal of the Calvinistic system, advocating a modified Calvinism. "God decreed" he says, "to impart His love, His grace, and His gifts in larger measure to some than to others and this according to His own will and pleasure—but His loving kindness is so great and so far reaching and so all inclusive that no one is excluded therefrom without a just cause." Ris evidently is not quite sure of himself on this point and finds consolation in the thought that anyway in "the wisdom and ways of God, especially in this matter there are depths which will ever be beyond our ability to fathom in this life." A number of recent Confessions emphasizing such doctrines as Sanctification, Holiness, etc., are undoubtedly tending toward a more rigid Calvinism.

On the general church doctrines such as Creation, Fall of Man, Trinity, Christ, His nature and function, the Scheme of Salvation, Resurrection and the Future Life, Mennonites held the usual orthodox beliefs of the Protestant churches. But on a number of points their beliefs were sufficiently individualistic to merit extended mention.

Baptism was to them merely an initiatory ceremony signifying membership in the body of believers organized as a church. The church is a voluntary association composed of those possessed of a regenerated heart. Infant baptism consequently, the sign of compulsory initiation into a universal, unregenerated state church they condemned. It was the insistence upon adult or believers baptism that first gave Mennonites the name of Anabaptists. As to the form of baptism the early Mennonites

generally practised sprinkling, although several divisions occurred in Holland and northern Germany during the sixteenth century because of this question, resulting in a "dompelaar" or immersionist wing of the church. The Confessions are all silent on the question of the form except that of Cornelis Ris, which evidently aimed to conciliate the immersionists with the statement that the act is "an immersing of the whole body in the water, or a liberal sprinkling with water, which latter mode we in these northern latitudes consider more generally appropriate, since the same blessings are signified by it." At present in America the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the Bruedergemeinde and the Krimmer Brueder practice immersion. With the Defenceless Mennonites the form is optional with the candidate.

The **Lord's Supper** was regarded as merely a memorial in commemoration of the suffering and death of the Savior. The bread and wine contains neither the real nor spiritual presence of Christ as the state churches teach.

The practise of **Feet-washing** was inaugurated by the Anabaptists and was based on a literal interpretation of the example of Jesus at the last Supper. The practise was common among a number of the Mennonite churches in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but not universal. The significance of the practice, which was regarded as a binding ordinance by such churches as kept it, is two-fold according to the Confessions which advocate it—"an act of humiliation and a sign of the true washing of the soul in the blood of Christ."

As to form, there were two methods of administering the practise. Some following the literal example of Jesus made it a part of the communion service; others observed it in its earlier Old Testament form and washed the feet of distant ministering brethren when making visits. The practise was not observed among the Dutch Waterlanders, but was common among the Old Flemish and the strict Frisians, and was introduced by the latter wherever they migrated into northern Germany and later into Russia. In South Germany and Switzerland it was not common in the seventeenth century, but was introduced by the Amish in Switzerland and the Palantinate near the close of the century.

DANIEL BRENNEMAN
(1834-1919)

JOSEPH STUCKEY
(1825-1902)

JOHN S. COFFMAN
(1848-1899)

Among the early writers Dirck Philip was the most consistent advocate of the custom. Menno Simons gives it only a passing reference in his written works, and even then he seems to refer rather to the custom of washing the feet of visiting ministers than to a communion ordinance. The various Confessions of Faith differ widely in their treatment of the subject. None specify that the practise is to be observed as an ordinance in connection with the communion service, but in the absence of any directions to the contrary it is perhaps fair to assume that such observance is taken for granted in the Confessions advocating the general custom. Among these are the Dordrecht, Olive Branch, Prussian (1678), and the Old Flemish Confessions. The Concept of Cologne states that the rite shall be administered when members of the faith request it. The Jan Cents articles recommend that "when our fellow believers from distant places come to visit us we wash their feet according as opportunity affords, after the custom of the Old Testament and the example of Christ." The Pieter Jans Twisck Confession of thirty-three articles advocates the same form of the practise. The Hans de Ries and the Cornelis Ris Confessions make no reference to the ordinance whatsoever.

The custom was not common in America among the Germantown and Skippack settlements for the first hundred years. It was introduced into Lancaster county by the Amish and the Pequea Mennonites and through these throughout the entire colonial church. The practise has been discarded in Europe except among the Amish and perhaps among some of the more conservative Russians. In America it is still quite widely observed, being a cardinal ordinance among the Old Mennonites, Amish of all branches, the Illinois Conference of Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ, Reformed Mennonites, Wisler Mennonites, Bruedergemeinde, Krimmer Brueder, Defenceless Mennonites, and a number of individual congregations among the Russians in the General Conference. It is also still common among a number of sects which had an Anapabtist or later Mennonite origin, such as the Dunkards, Primitive Baptists, Moravians (not since 1818), United Brethren, River Brethren, etc.

Among the Old Mennonites one still frequently finds among the older brethren those who follow to the letter the example of Christ when he arose from supper "and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself."

One of the most fundamental and distinctive Mennonite doctrines is that of **Non-resistance.** All the Confessions condemn unqualifiedly the taking of revenge or the use of force in settling disputes either individually or collectively. War they declare to be wrong, and the Christian has no part in it. All are agreed, too, that the Christian cannot be a magistrate. The early Anabaptist and Mennonite view of government was that it was a divine institution ordained of God to punish the evil and protect the good—a sort of necessary evil—and that it was the duty of the Christian to pray for his rulers and obey them. But since government was essentially worldly the Christian could take no part in it.

This view is the outgrowth of the doctrine of non-resistance, which based upon the principle of love as a ruling force in human conduct, and upon a literal interpretation of such injunctions as "Resist not evil," etc., regarded all use of force as wrong, especially if used to the bodily injury of a fellow being either friend or foe. Undoubtedly the application of the doctrine to government was also partly due to the fact that governments were everywhere using their power to suppress religious toleration. Although this function of government has greatly changed since the early days both in Europe and America, magistrates must still depend upon the use of physical force to maintain social order. In Europe the old views have been almost entirely discarded, but in America there is still a strong sentiment against the holding of office among the more conservative branches. The Old Mennonites and Amish discourage the holding of office beyond that of road supervisor, school directors, and similar local offices. The Reformed Mennonites, Wisler Mennonites, and even some of the more liberal groups either forbid entirely or discourage going to the polls to vote in the regular elections. In spite of these restrictions, however, the number in all branches who ac-

cept local, town and county positions of trust is increasing. In recent years a number from different localities have been elected to state legislatures as well as other positions. The present Congress contains one Mennonite and another member who at one time had been of that faith. Few perhaps would accept such an office as that of sheriff which would involve the enforcing of the death penalty. One Mennonite from a western State some time ago refused the nomination for governor at the hands of his party on the ground that if elected he could not conscientiously enforce capital punishment. There is a strong sentiment among many of the branches against making use of the law in securing justice in personal disputes, but practically all permit the use of legal measures in defensive action. On the question of war also the official leaders of all the branches in the American church remained true to her traditional peace principles during the recent war.

Church discipline was maintained among the Mennonites by a liberal application of the **Ban.** Since the church was a voluntary organization divinely ordained, and composed of the truly converted it must be kept pure by excluding all those who proved themselves unfaithful. The Ban was pronounced upon the guilty through the elder or bishop by a vote of the congregation. During Menno's lifetime the question of a liberal or strict application of this means of church discipline was a source of bitter quarreling. Menno himself favoring the strict party, maintained that without a liberal use of the Ban it would have been impossible in his day to keep the church free of the "corrupt sects." Closely associated with the Ban was the practise of "Avoidance" or shunning all those who were excommunicated. This question, too, for years was a source of endless bickering and countless heartaches, dividing the church almost from the beginning into loose and strict constructionist parties with reference to the practise. The liberals contended that the Pauline injunction "not to eat" with the unfaithful (I Cor. 5:11), referred merely to the communion table, but the strict party insisted upon a rigid social and business ostracism. The faithful were not to eat, drink, visit, buy from nor sell to one excommunicated. Some, includ-

ing Menno himself, would even apply the principle to all family and marriage relations.

The reason for the practise according to the Dordrecht Confession was "so that we may not become defiled by intercourse with him—and that he may be made ashamed—and thereby induced to amend his ways." The latter reason was undoubtedly based upon a correct literal quotation of Scripture, but upon rather poor psychology as well. Although none of the Confessions, with the possible exception of the Old Flemish, specifically mention marital avoidance, it is perhaps implied in the Confessions advocating the strict application of the avoidance practise. Among these are the Dordrecht, Olive Branch, Jan Cents, Pieter Janz Twisck, and the Concept of Cologne statements. All warn against carrying the practise too far, however. Cornelis Ris on the other hand would deny the excommunicated only "spiritual church fellowship." In America the Reformed Mennonites, Old Order Amish, and Old Colonists in Manitoba still "shun" their excommunicated of whom they usually have a large number, to the limit. Wherever the practise is carried to its extreme length especially in closed communities where there is little opportunity for social or economical life outside of the church community, and especially if the domestic relations are involved, the results are frequently tragic. Among the so-called "New Amish" in central Illinois, who undoubtedly inherited the practise from the Mennonites in Switzerland during the early part of the past century, several domestic tragedies have occurred in recent years one of which ended in the annihilation of an entire family. The great majority of Mennonites in both America and Europe of course have outgrown this doctrine.

In addition to the above enumerated doctrines the church was also committed to a number of practises and customs which were perhaps more or less common to other denominations, but since discarded, and for that reason not matters of dispute and not included in the Confessions.

Among these was the so-called **Devotional Covering.** It was undoubtedly a common custom in the early as well as the later Reformation churches for women to appear in worship with their

Group of Students of the Old Elkhart Institute.

heads covered. Among the Mennonites, however, this covering developed in course of time into something distinct from the ordinary headgear worn for protection. Among the Old Mennonites, Amish and Reformed Mennonites and several other small branches of the denomination this covering, still worn during worship, consists of a small tightfitting cap made of a white gauze material. In Pennsylvania among these branches the women are required to wear this cap at all times and on all occasions, not only at times of worship. Another custom inherited from the past and still practised among the above mentioned conservative groups as well as several others is the **Salutation of the Kiss**, practised in connection with the feet-washing service, and a common method of greeting among ministers and church leaders, and also made a part of every religious rite. Other questions which in recent years have been given increasing attention by various branches of the denomination are Millennialism, Sanctification, Inspiration of the Bible, Higher Criticism, Adoption, Divine Healing, Anti-secrecy, Life Insurance, etc.

It will be remembered of course that in this discussion we are dealing with the past history of the Mennonites as well as the various groups of the present. Many of the above practises and customs have been discarded of course among the more liberal elements of the denomination, and especially among the General Conference congregations, the most liberal of which are those in Pennsylvania.

In the field of **Church Government** Mennonites were the original Congregationalists. Each congregation was an independent unit. Conferences were held occasionally to settle matters of controversy, but they had no power to legislate for the entire church. In recent years annual conferences have been organized which are coming to assume more and more of legislative power. Ministers according to the various Confessions were of two ranks—elders or bishops, and deacons. In practise, however, three were recognized—Elders (Voellige Diener), with power to administer the sacraments and enforce Church discipline; Ministers, mere preachers (Diener zum Buch); and deacons (Armen

Diener), who looked after the poor and also assisted in adjusting any personal disputes that might arise within the Congregation. Ministers at first had to support themselves. It was not until far into the seventeenth century that they were given stated salaries in Holland, and northern Germany. In South Germany, Switzerland and Russia they remained unsupported until well within recent years. An unsupported ministry of course also meant an uneducated ministry. In America it was only within recent times that the Eastern and Middle Districts of the General Conference of Mennonites of North America placed their ministry upon a salaried basis. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ support their ministers but not always with a specified salary. In all the other branches of the denomination including many of the Russian congregations in the west, the work of the ministry is still a work of love with a few material rewards. The demand for trained missionaries and ministers, however, is everywhere making for a regularly supported ministry among all but a few of the most ultra-conservative branches. At present several different types of church polity are discernable. The Old Mennonites practise a sort of primitive episcopacy, that is a bishop for every church. In Lancaster county, however, a half dozen bishops form a sort of Council which dominates the entire church in that large settlement. In the General Conference the term bishop is not used. The government is strictly congregational, but some authorities in the church note a tendency toward Presbyterianism. The Mennonite Brethren in Christ follow the Methodists in a semi-episcopal church polity.

The method of selection under the old system was by lot, and acceptance was compulsory on the part of those chosen. Such a call was conceived of as coming direct from God, and could not be set aside. Once thus called, the minister carried his office with him wherever he went and had a divine right to preach in whatever congregation he chose to make his home irrespective of their own wishes in the matter. His call came from God, not men. In this way some congregations, especially among the early immigrants in America, frequently became oversupplied with spiritual leadership. The Partridge Amish congre-

gation in central Illinois during the middle of the last century was blessed at one time with thirteen ministers four of whom were bishops all of equal jurisdiction by virtue of their residence. No special training was demanded, in fact none was permitted. The Holy Spirit, it was said, would guide the speaker's tongue when the need came for him to preach. These theories and practises were common among even the most liberal of the Mennonites until far into the middle of the last century and still prevail among the ultra-conservatives.

Mennonites have always lived in more or less secluded groups, and were endowed with a strong sense of "other worldliness." This feeling of seclusion was due to several causes. In the early Anabaptist days they were driven from pillar to post by unfriendly state and church authorities, preventing intercourse with the outside world. A literal interpretation of the Scriptures emphasized the virtue of being a "peculiar people." Marriage with outsiders was forbidden under penalty of excommunication. They were, too, for the most part a rural people, and settled in closed communities. In America many of these were made up of immigrant groups who by maintaining their own language tended to perpetuate their isolation. The city churches of Holland and northern Germany were the first to escape from their extreme provincialism, but in other parts of Europe and in America where the churches are still almost entirely in the country Mennonites retain much of this early spirit. This conservatism has perpetuated many antiquated customs especially in styles of clothing, among several branches of the church. The Old Mennonites, the Amish, Reformed Mennonites, Huterites, and Old Colonists of Manitoba and the Wislerites are the strictest observers of bygone styles of dress. Most of these require the women to wear bonnets instead of hats, and recommend that the men wear the so-called collarless plain coat. Stiff hats and neckties are not in good standing. The Old Order Amish, some of them, still forbid the use of suspenders, "store" clothes, starched shirts and other modern styles of dress. Men must wear long hair, beards, and old style trousers. Women appear in bright, but plain clothes with capes and aprons. The dress question has

always played too large a role in the history of the Mennonite church.

The American Mennonites imported from Europe and retained in their public worship and daily intercourse some form of German dialect. The early Pennsylvanians brought with them the Swiss and South German dialects which have since developed into the Pennsylvania Dutch. The Illinois Amish brought the Alsatian, and the Ohio Swiss at the same time the Swiss dialects. The Russians spoke some form of Low German. The Russians and the Swiss still retain the German in most of their worship, but all the others have changed to the English during the past twenty-five years. The maintenance of a foreign language has been a strong contributing factor in keeping up Mennonite provincialism during the past.

Although Mennonites have always lived a simple and somewhat secluded life, they were noted for their liberal endowment of the fundamental virtues of life. They were industrious, sober, honest, philanthropic, law-abiding and religious. Today they are everywhere well-to-do and are among the most peaceful and generally prosperous people in their respective communities.

CHAPTER XXII

STATISTICS

The following statistics are taken from various sources, and are approximately correct, although no attempt is made to give the exact numbers as they appear in the various official statistics, since the official lists for the different countries are not all for the same year. In Europe it will be noted the figures include the entire Mennonite population, and not only the baptized members as in statistics for the United States and Canada.

Europe.

	(Entire Population)	(Baptized Members Only)
Netherlands	65,000	
Switzerland	1,500	
Galicia	590	
Germany	20,000	
Russia	85,000	
France—Alsace-Lorraine	3,500	
	175,090	

North America.

United States and Canada.

1.	The Old Mennonites	28,000
2.	The General Conference of Mennonites	17,000
3.	Amish Mennonites	9,000
4.	Old Order Amish	8,000
5.	Mennonite Brethren in Christ	7,500
6.	Bruedergemeinde	6,700
7.	Central Conference of Mennonites	2,500
8.	Church of God in Christ	1,500
9.	Wisler Mennonites	1,600
10.	Conference of Defenceless Mennonites of North America	1,400
11.	Amish Mennonites (Conservative)	1,250

12.	Reformed Mennonites	1,200
13.	Huterites	1,000
14.	Krimmer Mennonite Brethren	1,000
15.	Defenceless Mennonites	900
16.	Staufferites	200
17.	Independent Russian Groups in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta	9,500
		98,250

CHAPTER XXIII

BIBLIOGRAPHY

In the following bibliography no attempt is made to list all the books in the field of Mennonite history, but rather to cite the reader to the most important sources and books on the subject all of which are available in the various Mennonite libraries in this country. Among the most valuable collections of Mennonite books in America are the private collections of N. B. Grubb of Philadelphia; John F. Funk, Elkhart, Indiana; C. H. A. van der Smissen, Berne, Indiana; the College Collections at Bethel, Goshen and Bluffton; the library of the Mennonite Historical Commission at Scottdale, Pa., and that of the Mennonite Historical Society of the General Conference in charge of H. R. Voth of Goltry, Oklahoma; Mennonite books in the Pennsylvania State Historical Society Library; and stray books in other large public and University Libraries.

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